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THE  
S O P H A :

M O R A L T A L E .

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

*John et de*  
Monsieur C H A T I L L O N .

A NEW EDITION.

VOL. I.

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MORAL TALE

THE NEW EDITION



THE NEW EDITION

A NEW EDITION

VOL. I.

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# C O N T E N T S

OF THE

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THE

## INTRODUCTION.

**I**T is now some ages since a prince, named Schah-Baham, reigned over the Indies. He was grandson of the magnanimous Schah-Riar, whose great actions are recorded in the Thousand and One Nights, and who, among other things, took so much delight in strangling his wives, and in hearing of tales; even he, who extended the royal grace to the incomparable Scheherazade, in consideration alone of the historical treasures she was mistress of.

Whether Schah-Baham was not very tenacious of his honour, or whether his wives were not so liberal of their favours to their negroes, or whether they took care to keep the secret from him, (which is not the least probable) certain it is, he was an easy, commodious husband, and inherited from Schah-

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Riar only his virtues, and his passion for tales. 'Tis worth remarking, that the collection of tales of Scheherazade, which his illustrious grandfather caused to be wrote in letters of gold, was the only book he vouchsafed to read during his whole reign.

How far tales may embellish the mind, or how agreeable, or sublime soever the knowledge and ideas may be that we draw from thence, it is dangerous to devote our whole time to such kind of reading. Those of the deepest penetration, who are above narrow prejudices, and see the insufficiency of the sciences, are the only persons capable of judging what use these sort of compositions are of to society, as well as what esteem, or even veneration, is due to those, who discover a genius for them, and have resolution enough to dare to undertake them, in spite of the contempt, which pride and ignorance have fixed on this species of writing. The important truths that are couched under fables, the noble sallies of imagination



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tion we so frequently meet with in them, and the ludicrous ideas they abound with, take not with the vulgar, who generally commend those things most they comprehend least; which, nevertheless, they fancy themselves wise enough to understand.

Schah-Baham is a memorable instance of the injustice of mankind in this respect: tho' he could tell you the origin of the Fairies, as exactly as if he had lived in those times; tho' no one had a more distinct knowledge of the celebrated country of Ginnistan, or was more deeply versed in the famous dynasties of the first kings of Persia; and tho' he was incontestibly the most conversant of any in the history of events, which had never happened; notwithstanding all this, he passed for the weakest prince of his time.

We must own indeed, he had not the gracefulest manner in the world in his narratives; and what added to the disagreeableness, he knew not when to leave off.

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With this propensity therefore, it was impossible he should not become somewhat tedious; more especially as his auditors always consisted of women and courtiers, who being generally persons as delicate as superficial, are more attentive to the elegance of a turn, than they are struck with the justness and greatness of a thought. 'Twas, doubtless, from what the courtiers themselves said of Schah-Baham, that Scheik-Ebu-Taher-Abou-Feraiky, an historian, and co-temporary with that prince, laid the foundation for the character he has given of him in his Grand History of the Indies; and which is such as you will see faithfully set forth in the sequel: 'tis taken from that part, where he speaks of tales.

Schah-Baham, first of that name, was an exceeding weak and effeminate prince: it was not possible to be endowed with less understanding; and (what is pretty common, and in which particular he has a great many like

## INTRODUCTION. ♥

like him) it was not possible to have a higher conceit of it. He usually made a wonder at what was the most obvious, and had no conception but for things the most absurd, and out of all credibility. If he happened to think, even once in a twelve-month, he could scarce hold his tongue a minute in a day. He spoke of himself nevertheless with excessive modesty, and was graciously pleased to decline all pretensions to wit and vivacity; but for solidity of reflection he took upon him to say, there was not his equal.

Those pleasures which depend on the mind, affected not the sultan; all kind of exercise was displeasing to him, and yet he never wanted occupation. He had a variety of birds, that contributed much to his amusement: his parrots, thanks to the care he took in their education, were the stupidest parrots in all India; without reckoning his monkies, to whom he devoted no small part of his time; besides his women, who after the birds and the beasts of his

## vi INTRODUCTION.

menagerie, appeared to him the next proper objects of his diversion.

Yet, in spite of these high avocations; in spite of all his varied pleasures, the sultan's time hung heavy on his hands. Even his darling tales, those constant objects of his wonder and veneration, which it was death to criticise upon, even they began to grow insipid from an incessant repetition. Not that he was not still an admirer of them; but only he could not help now and then yawning out his admiration. In fine, his irksomeness followed him even into the apartments of his women; where he passed a part of his life in seeing them embroider and pink, being arts he had in singular estimation, the invention of which he looked upon as the master-piece of human wit, and ordered all his courtiers to give their whole application to them.

As he was extremely liberal in his rewards to the proficient in those arts, there was an universal emulation through the empire to excel



# INTRODUCTION. vii

excel in them; insomuch that embroidering and pinking, soon became the only means in the Indies to arrive at preferment and honours. The sultan acknowledged no other kind of merit; or at least took it for granted, when once a man was possessed of these talents, he had of course all the requisites to make a great general, or consummate statesman. To give a proof how much he was convinced of this truth, he advanced to the dignity of first vizir a courtier of this effeminate stamp. He had lived long unnoticed among the herd of courtiers, who, not knowing how to employ their time, pass it with troubling kings with their presence, and reciprocally in making the presence of majesty as troublesome to themselves; but happy for him, he was looked on as the ablest pinker in the kingdom, when it pleased Schah-Baham to take it into his head to reverence pinking; nor was he indebted, like many others, for the high honour of being pinker to his royal

## viii INTRODUCTION.

master, and holding the first employment in the empire, to cabals and intrigues, but he owed it purely to the superiority of his genius.

Of all the wives of Schah-Baham, the queen sultaneſs was diſtinguiſhed for her ſuperior ſenſe, and made the delight of thoſe, who, in ſo trifling a court, had yet the ſpirit to think, and glory in a purſuit of knowledge. She was the ſole patroness of the merit ſhe could diſcern ſo well; and the ſultan himſelf would ſeldom care to ſwerve from her advice, tho' ſhe was far from approving either his taſte, or his pleaſures. If on ſome occaſions ſhe rallied him on his monkies, and his other amuſements, he contented himſelf with ſaying, ſhe was waſpiſh, which is the common-place objection of fools to men of wit.

One day the ſultan being with his whole court in the apartment of the women, profoundly attentive to their work, was ſcarce able notwithstanding to ſubdue the  
assaults

## INTRODUCTION. ~~It~~

assaults of an approaching fit of heaviness; but at last, with wonderful alacrity, I am not surprised, cries he, yawning, that I was just dropping asleep——Why, we are all as mute as fishes——Come—talk—talk——How I love talk! It's so pithy!

What subject, says the sultaneß, would your majesty please to have us talk of? Very pretty, truly, replied he; I would have you talk, and you would have me tell you what you shall talk of, as if I were born a conjuror. Is it not enough that I command you to talk to me of something, without being obliged myself to name the individual thing I would have talked of? But do you know, now, that you have nothing near as much wit as you may imagine you have; that people dream more than they talk, and that the few good things are said, which one in ten don't understand, is within an am's ace in my mind of being silly, flat stuff. For example; do you think, if the sultaneß Scheherazade was living, and among us, she

## \* INTRODUCTION:

would not readily tell us the beautifullest tales in the world, without waiting to be asked by my aunt Dinarzade? — But à-propos——talking of her has put a scruple in my head. Let her memory have been ever so good, it is impossible she could retain all the stories she was so amply furnished with: what if no body should precisely remember those she forgot? or should none have been wrote since her time? or be actually a writing?——Spare, Sir, your doubts on that head, cries the vizir; I have the honour to assure your majesty, that I am not only in possession of a plentiful stock of tales, but have likewise so whimsical a talent at inventing them, that even those of your late illustrious grandmother do not surpass them.

Vizir! vizir! said the sultan, that is saying a bold word! My grandmother was a person of a phoenix merit.

Doubtless, cries the sultaneßs, there goes a prodigious deal to the making of a tale!

Would



## INTRODUCTION. xi

Would not one really imagine, to hear you, that it was the last effort of human invention ! yet what can be more puerile, more absurd ? What is a work, (if a tale deserves that name) what is a work, I say, where probability is continually violated, and the received mode of thinking as constantly destroyed ? It is a work, that is built on the trivial, and the false marvellous ; that presents you with extraordinary beings, and the almightiness of fairies ; that over-turns the order of nature and the elements, only for the sake of creating ridiculous objects, the mere children of a distempered brain, and which very seldom repay us for the extravagance of their creation. Happy would it be, if these wretched compositions only took from our wisdom ; but I fear by their too lively descriptions, so offensive to modesty, they reach the heart, and leave dangerous impressions behind.

Much ado about nothing, says the sultan, very gravely——pompous words, without

## xii INTRODUCTION.

any meaning.—What you say, I must own, is striking at first; but by the help of a little reflection, I find upon the whole, that the thing in question is to know whether you are in the right? Now, as I was resolved to clear up the point, and have just finished the solution of it, I must tell you, I don't believe a syllable of the fine things you have been saying. 'Tis not that I intend, by defending my assertion, to play the logician; but, since a tale has ever afforded me the most refined amusement, it necessarily follows, that a tale is not so frivolous a thing as you would make it. And most certainly I am not so weak, to be brought to believe it possible for a sultan to be a fool. Besides—that is, by way of parenthesis—It is full as evident, that a marvellous thing—by which I understand one of these things—which I could easily explain, if necessary—But, to deal sincerely, what is this to us, after all? What I maintain is, that I am an admirer of tales, and that

# INTRODUCTION. xiii

that they are not so agreeable to me, unless there be what we people of taste call a little of the roguish in them. That gives them an interesting turn——so affecting!—As for the rest, I conceive you perfectly; 'tis as if you were to say to me, I am the ingenious he, that can both tell, and make a tale——He is the man for me——I am thinking how we shall shorten the tedious length of days——Let every one recount his story—When I say story, I understand myself, do you see! I mean those consisting of surprising events, of fairies, of enchantments——I hold no other for truth, and you may believe me——Well, then—Every one agrees, I find, to tell his story. Mahomed assist me! But, why do I ask assistance! Need I once doubt of exceeding the universe in my attempts that way, since I am descended from progenitors so renowned for their fabulous productions?

Upon the whole, then, without favour or affection, I make the following declaration;

First,

#### xiv INTRODUCTION.

First, That all and singular of our loving subjects shall have the liberty to relate his story to us; that every one shall begin in his turn, not as our will, but as the lot shall decide; and lastly, that there shall be set apart for the above-mentioned purpose, half an hour every day, more or less, according as it shall be agreeable to us.

On finishing these words, he caused the whole court to draw lots. The vizir was very desirous of having the first lot; but, to his mortification, it fell on a young courtier, who, after having obtained the sultan's permission, began thus.

THE



THE  
SOPHIA:

A  
MORAL TALE.

PART I.

CHAP. I.

*The least tiresome in the Book.*

YOU are not, may it please your majesty, to be told, that tho' your subject, I make not profession of the same religion, and acknowledge no other than the god Brama.

Suppose I am not, says the sultan, what embellishment is that to your tale? your religion is your own, and no concern of mine;

mine ; and 'tis so much the worse for yourself, if you worship Brama instead of Mahomed, who is worth a hundred of the former. But, tho' I mention this as a friend, don't run away with a thing, and fancy I do it to top the doctor upon you ; for really, to be plain, I am very indifferent about the matter—— Go on.

The followers of Brama, Sir, believe in the transmigration of souls, continued Amanzei, (for that is the name of the relator) that is to say, not to confound your majesty, we believe, that immediately on the dissolution of the body, the soul passes into another, and so successively, as long as it shall please Brama, or till the soul is become sufficiently purified to be ranked among those spirits, whom in their due time he has judged worthy of eternal happiness.

Now, tho' this opinion of the metempsychosis be generally established among us, we have not all the same reasons for believing in the certainty of it; since there are but  
very

very few, to whom it is permitted to remember the different transmigrations of their soul. It ordinarily happens, that on the dissolution of the body, where a soul had been imprisoned, it enters into another, without preserving the least traces of its former condition, either as to knowledge acquired, or things, in which it had borne a part.

Thus are our faults continually lost to us, and we begin a fresh career with a soul as new, and as susceptible of vice and error, as when Brama first took it from that immense whirling mass of fire, of which it makes a part, till its final destination.

There are many among us, who murmur at this disposition of Brama; but I question much whether with any reason. Our souls, destined, for a long succession of ages, to pass from body to body, would for the most part, be unhappy, if they were to remember what they had been. A soul, for instance, after having animated the body of a  
king,

king, if it should find itself in that of a reptile, or which is still more to be lamented, in the body of one of those wretched mortals, afflicted with want and misery of every kind, its new condition would be insupportable.

On the other hand, I grant if a man, who sees himself rolling in wealth, or elevated to supreme dignity, should remember his having been but an insect, he would possibly make a less bad use of the affluence, or state, in which the goodness of Brama had placed him. If we consider, however, the haughtiness, the cruelty, the insolence of those, who, from the lowest stations in life, are raised by fortune to the highest, we may reasonably believe, from their great promptitude to forget their former estate, that their humiliation will yet have a more rapid transition, without having the least merit in their future transmigration.

Besides—the soul would find itself overburthened with the vast number of ideas  
must



must necessarily have accrued from precedent existencies; and, perhaps, by being more attentive to what it had been, than to what it should be, would neglect the functions of the body it actually occupies, and thereby, in short, confound the order of nature, rather than rectify it.

Prithee now, what is't you're about, interrupted the sultan? Mahomed, pardon me! the man is certainly preaching up morality to me!—May it please your majesty, answered Amanzei, I hoped some preliminary reflections might not be improper——Very improper, I tell you, replied Schah-Baham, and surely I should know best; for, whatever you may think, I declare, I have no relish for morality; it's dry; and you'll very much oblige me to leave it quite out.

Your majesty is obeyed — answered Amanzei—Brama, may it please you, Sir, as has been already observed, sometimes permits us to remember what we have been, especially after some very remarkable punishment;

nishment; and, as a proof of it, I perfectly remember myself to have been a Sopha.

A sopha, cried the sultan—poo! poo! impossible! Do you take me for an ostrich, to digest such gross absurdities? I could find in my heart to have you scorched a little, young gentleman, to teach you how you vent such idle stuff before us, and in so positive a manner.

Your most gracious majesty is pleased to be facetious to-day, says the sultaneß.—It is the most glorious part of your character to doubt of nothing, and yet you will not believe it possible for a man to have been a sopha! that is not being quite consistent with yourself.

I see, you think to foil me by objections; and yet, methinks, I am not in the wrong—not but I may, however be mistaken——No—now I think on't, I am in the right. I cannot, in very conscience, believe Aman-zei; and shall I be a cypher of a mussul-man?

O won-

O wonderful! answered the sultaneſs—well, ſince I perceive there is conſcience in the caſe, I will beg leave to propoſe an expedient: you may give Amanzei the hearing, without believing him—Why ay, reſumed the ſultan—It ſhall not be becauſe the thing is incredible, that I will not believe it, but becauſe, tho' it were ever ſo true, that I ought not to believe it. I am very ſenſible there's a wide difference—And ſo, you ſay, Amanzei, that you have been a ſopha? A terrible adventure, on my honour! prithee tell me—was you a plain, or an embroidered ſopha?

The latter, pleaſe your majeſty, answered Amanzei—And this receptacle of my ſoul, was roſe-colour, embroidered with ſilver—Very good, ſays the ſultan—You muſt have made a tolerable piece of furniture—But, pray, why did your Brama convert you into a ſopha, of all things? What was the humour of that?—A Sopha!—Well, it paſſes all credulity.

It

— It was to punish my soul for its inordinate desires, replied Amanzei — Had the immortal Brama placed it in any other body, it would not so effectually have answered his purpose; and therefore he rightly judged, that he should mortify me more by making me a sofa, than if he had sent me into a reptile.

I remember, on my soul's quitting the body of a woman, it took possession of an egregious affected fop, who was a busy, fluttering, vain, empty thing, full of scandal, and inconstant; a great connoisseur in trifles; wholly taken up in dress, and a thousand other important nothings; so that, I could scarce perceive I had changed habitation.

I should be very glad to know, interrupted the sultan, a little of your history, while you was a woman: the relation must be extremely curious; for I have ever thought, that women are mysterious beings. I don't know whether you conceive me; but I mean,



mean, it is difficult to guess at their thoughts.

Perhaps, answered Amanzei, we should not be so much at a loss on that head, if we believed them less artful. If I remember right, I used to be very satirical on those, who praised me for solidity of reflection, while I owed my ideas entirely to the present moment; or, who expected reason from one, who was governed solely by the law of caprice; or, who again, by endeavouring too much to scrutinize, were the least able to see into me. I was faithful at the time I was thought false: I passed for a coquette, when in reality I was a prude; and I felt the warmest inclinations, when it was imagined I had the coldest indifference. The character they gave me, for the most part, was not my own, or such as I had renounced long before. Those whose interest it was to know me best, and with whom I disssembled the least; or to whom even, thro' a natural indiscretion and giddiness in me,

I dis-

I disclosed the whole secrets of my soul, were not the people that placed the greatest confidence in me, or who put the kindest constructions on my actions. Thus, by judging of me only according to the ideas they themselves had formed of me, they were perpetually mistaken, and thought they knew me thoroughly, because their character of me was agreeable to their own imagination.

Where is the novelty of all this? cries the sultan: are we to be told at this time of day, that it is past human understanding, to know women thoroughly? I have a long time given over all hopes of the discovery—So, prithee, Amanzei, let us have done with this discussion—it quite wearies out the mind, and occasions a long preamble, foreign to my question—I thought I wanted to know what you did while you was a woman.

I have, please you majesty, answered Amanzei, but a very faint idea of what I then

then did: what chiefly occurs to me is, that in my bloom, I was immoderately vain, and soon distinguished myself for a finished coquette. I was incapable of love or hate; I never thought; had no principle of action; but was, by turns, what people would have me, or as my interests and pleasures directed. After a series of unbounded irregularities, I commenced prude, when it was become necessary to affect a regard for virtue; and, in fine, finished my course in indulging myself with the thoughts of past pleasures.

It was from the great passion I had had for Sophas, I suppose, that made the all-just Brama think of confining my soul to this piece of furniture. He was pleased to suffer it to retain all its faculties in this prison, in order no doubt, rather to give me a more exquisite sense, than to mitigate the horror of my lot; nor was it to be released from thence, till two lovers should

yield upon me the first-fruits of a mutual affection.

What! mincing the matter again! cried the sultan; as if you could not out with it at once, and tell us in direct terms, that—You will not, sure, interrupted the sultaness, be so gracious as to give us an explanation? Why not, resumed he? I like people should speak to be understood—However, Madam, if it is not agreeable to you, let Amanzei be as obscure as he pleases—thank our prophet! I don't want conception.

The memory I retained of what I had done and seen, was sufficient, continued Amanzei, to convince me, that the condition of my enlargement was such as would make my doom not of short continuance; but, however, the permission allowed me by Brahma, to transport myself, at pleasure, from Sopha to Sopha, was no small alleviation: it afforded a variety, that softened my imprisonment: and besides, as my soul re-  
tained



tained the same pleasure in ridicule, as when it animated a woman; and as I had withal the privilege of admission into the most private recesses, and of making a third person in actions that were imagined to be the most concealed, I confess these advantages made some amends for my punishment.

After Brama had pronounced my sentence, he was pleased to transport my soul into a Sopha, that was carrying home to a woman of quality, who had the character of being a lady of consummate virtue. But if it be true, that few pass for heroes with those, who see them near at hand, I can also say, that there are few chaste women on the Sopha.

## CHAP. II.

*Will not please every-body.*

**A**SOPHA not being the proper furniture of an antichamber, I was placed in a cabinet, a little separated from the palace of the lady I was going to belong to. Here she used often to retire, as she said, to her private devotions, and that she might offer up her vows to Brama with the less interruption. As soon as I entered the cabinet, I could not help suspecting, from the manner in which I saw it adorned, that it did not seem a proper place for such pious purposes: not that there was any thing sumptuous, or over-affected in the furniture; for, at the first glance, all appeared rather grave than gay; but, on a closer examination, I could perceive there reigned a kind of hypocritical luxury, which presented you with things that struck the eye, and were of a convenience not to be described;

## THE SOPHIA.

scribed; in short, with things which did not seem contrived for the use of austerity. At the same time I thought I was of a little too gaudy a colour myself for a woman, who pretended to be far removed from a coquette.

I had not been many minutes in the cabinet, before my mistress entered. She looked upon me with indifference; seemed satisfied, however; but was somewhat sparing of her praises of me, and then, with great absence of mind, she dismissed the workman. No sooner did she see herself alone, but her severe and gloomy aspect began to disappear, and I presently beheld another countenance, and other eyes. She examined and tried me several times with a precision, that presaged I was not bought for parade only. This little frolicksome experiment, and the tenderness she assumed on finding herself without a witness, did not, however, lessen in me the high opinion they had of her in Agra.

I was very sensible that there are few souls, how perfect soever they may be esteemed, but have their favourite vice; perhaps often attempted to be subdued, but, for the most part, triumphant; they seem to sacrifice their pleasures, only to return to them with more sensuality; and they often make virtue consist, less in self-denial, than in repentance. Hence I concluded, that Fatme might be of an indolent disposition, and I could not at that time have justified myself in carrying my conjectures farther.

Having satisfied her curiosity, as to me, she opened a private cupboard, artfully contrived in the wainscot, and taking a book, she passed to a stately book-case, filled with pompous volumes, ranged with extraordinary art. Hence she likewise took a book, and tossed it disdainfully upon me; and returning with the first she had chosen, she stretched herself on the downy cushions, which overspread me.

But,



But, prithee tell us, Amanzei, interrupted the sultan—was this very virtuous lady pretty? agreeable? so so? or what?

More beautiful, Sir, answered Amanzei, than she appeared to be. Had she even been less virtuous, with so abstracted an air, which produces scorn indeed, but which also excites desire, she might have disputed it with the fairest. Her features were lovely, without lure, without gaiety, without other aid than a certain self-denial in her looks, without which, women of this cast would fancy themselves lost to virtue. Every thing about her bespoke studied neglect and contempt of herself. She was well made, but awkward; and if there was a stiffness in her walk, it was because a slow pace, befits persons employed in subjects of the most serious nature. Her aversion for glare and dress, did not extend, indeed, to that negligence, which in other devotees becomes tasteful. Her habit was plain, and

of a colour somewhat dark; yet she discovered in that simplicity a taste not inferior to her rank. She was more particularly careful to lose nothing of the elegance of her shape; and, under all this shew of austerity, she discovered the height of female vanity in masquerade.

She did not seem to be much pleased with the last book she had taken, though a treatise of morality, composed by a celebrated bramin. Whether she imagined she had sufficient light within herself, or that she should not meet with any thing pleasing in that dry system; however that be, she did not vouchsafe to go further than the title-page before she threw it aside, for that taken out of the private cupboard in the wainscot, which was a delightful romance, full of interesting circumstances, as well as the most lively images of nature. This choice, so unbecoming Fatme, gave me a surprize I could not easily recover myself from. Doubtless, says I to myself, she does  
this

this to make trial of the firmness of her soul, and to see how far it is capable of withstanding those ideas, which usually work so powerfully in others.

As I did not, at that time, enter minutely into the motives of a conduct so contrary to the character I had conceived of her, I could do no less than suppose she acted from a good principle. I could not help remarking, however, that she was affected at what she read; her eyes began to sparkle, and she took them off the page, rather to indulge the pleasing idea, than to divert it. Recovering herself from the reflections she seemed buried in, she was about to resume the romance; but on hearing a sudden noise, she slipped it under me, and snatched up the colder volume of the bramin in its place, imagining it, no doubt, much fitter to be seen, than read.

She had no sooner opened it, than a very graceful person entered the cabinet, and approached her with such distant respect,

that, but for the magnificence of his habit, I should have taken him for one of the slaves of Fatme. On her part, she received him so coldly ! seemed so shocked at his presence ! spoke with so much ill-nature ! gave such broad hints of her distaste for his conversation ! that I presently guessed he could only be her husband ; neither was I mistaken in my conjecture. Ill received as he was, he made use of every soft persuasive, that she would permit him to sit by her, and met with as froward a refusal for a considerable time ; nor did she condescend at last, but in order to entertain him with impertinent reproaches for faults, she pretended he was every day guilty of. Notwithstanding this, the poor husband bore her petulant reproofs with a sweetness of temper, that raised my compassion in his behalf. The opinion he had of Fatme's virtue, contributed not a little to his docility, perhaps, to the full as much as her beauty ; and the little care she took to appear amiable in the eyes of her husband,



husband, served only to awaken his tenderness. The most timid lover, on the first declaration of his passion to a haughty mistress, could not be more put to it, than was this servile husband to tell his wife how much he adored her ! He pressed her in the tenderest, and most passionate terms, to return his ardour ; when, after a great deal of awkward resistance, she yielded at last as awkward a compliance.

But, in spite of the great scruples she had raised, to make him believe, she granted not what he exacted from her, but with the strongest reluctance. I could perceive she was less insensible than she wished to appear. Now again she grew more serious—There was a melting roll in her eye—Sigh after sigh succeeded—and through very negligence she became by far less active—Yet, after all, she valued not her husband. I cannot say what were the precise thoughts of Fatme on this occasion ; but whether it was gratitude that made her less rigid, or

she had farther designs on the assiduities of her husband, it is certain, there was a great change in her behaviour towards him: she was not so much shocked, as at his accosting her; but was tolerably tender in her expressions, which were yet delivered in a grave, sententious tone. The husband, however, was far from being able to see the motive of it, nor was at all affected by it; which did not a little serve to mortify Fatme. By degrees she wrought herself up to a quarrel, and in an instant saw all that was odious in him. What a life! How detestable his manners! What extravagance! What debaucheries! In fine, she loaded him with so many reproaches, that in spite of his patience, he was obliged to quit the room. Fatme was enraged at his departure. The anger that flashed from her eyes, more visible to me than it had been to her husband, made me easily perceive it was not his absence that could restore her tranquillity. And, indeed, by certain

tain expressions pronounced with a singular emphasis, when she found herself alone, all doubt was removed, as to what she thought.

How would Fatme! the example and terror of the women of Agra; whom all hated; yet all were proud to imitate; and before whom even the gayest put on the mask of hypocrisy: how would she have improved them, had they, like me, seen her in her solitude, and in all the freedom of the cabinet!

O lack! says the sultan, was she a woman, who at the bottom—Why, there's nothing so common—I would not have you think it so extraordinary a matter to—You know what—Hey!

Your majesty is so clear in your explanation, resumed Amanzei, there needs no further comment; and, without being too profound, I dare venture to say I understand your majesty to a tittle.

Indeed!

Indeed! says the sultan, laughing—  
well—come—unravel—unravel—What  
is it you gather?

That Fatme was the very reverse of what  
she pretended to be, answered Amanzei—  
My inmost thoughts, may I perish! inter-  
rupted the sultan—Go on—You've wit—  
You've wit.

Fatme, in appearance, shunned pleasures;  
continued Amanzei, but it was only to revel  
in greater security. She was not of the  
number of those imprudent women, who  
having spent their youth in every pleasure,  
gaiety and unwarrantable excess, abandon  
the toilet and the world, and after having  
been long the scandal of their time, set  
themselves up for the ornaments of it;  
thus, by affecting virtues they have not,  
they become even more contemptible than  
when they set scandal at defiance. Far  
from this was Fatme—Happy in being born  
with a natural propensity to hypocrisy,  
with a desire of public esteem, (a thing  
that seldom troubles the greener part of life.)

She



She was very early sensible of the powerful attraction of pleasure, and the impossibility of denying herself the gratification, without the most cruel sensations; yet she found at the same time, that a woman could not indulge herself publicly, without exposing herself to shame, and all the pangs and dangers that greatly serve to embitter the enjoyment. A little imposture therefore, became absolutely necessary; for she had made it her business less to subdue her passions, than to veil them under the appearance of rigid sanctity. She was naturally of an amorous complexion, yet was rather gross than tender in her inclinations; less delicate than sensual; she gave herself up to pleasure, but knew not what it was to love. She had not yet seen twenty-five years: she had been married; and it was more than eight since she had anticipated the nuptial joys. What usually captivates her sex, had no weight with Fatme; an amiable person; an infinity of wit, might

might possibly inspire her with wishes, but she yielded not to them. The objects of her passion she sought for elsewhere; among those, whose profession exempts them from suspicion, and is a seal for their silence; or among those, who, by the meanness of their stations, are too low to be suspected; whom liberality commands; whom fear renders secret; and who, in spite of the baseness of their employment, are capable of all the mysteries of love. Fatme, in fine, ill-natured, passionate, haughty, base, cruel, selfish, perfidious, without friendship, and without one good quality, abandoned herself to her inclinations, without any danger to her character: neither was there a vice which she did not even make subservient to this same dear reputation. Her seeming zeal for Brama; the sorrow she professed for the irregularities of others, and her charitable offices towards their conversion, not only covered, but sanctified more vices, than ever united

united in one woman. When she injured any one, 'twas always with such a good intent ! Her soul was so pure ! and she was so piously revengeful—what possibility was there to suspect, that so upright a person, in her hatred and malice, was guided alone by personal considerations ?

the romance, which she had loved by two women, whose conduct he pretended to see, one whose reward he was in reality, came to pay her a visit. He got up, and received them with so devoted and composed an air, the world have deceived the most discerning. It was with difficulty that the woman picked her own protesting, least before him, which he did, however, with much more tact than on, expressive of his own learned ignorance : in short, he seemed to stand with this testimony of her truthfulness, and even to purchase, that he was desirous of more, and this not to leave her the holy

CHAP.

## CHAP. III.

*Contains a great many improbabilities.*

AFTER the departure of her husband, Fatme was going to resume the romance, when an old bramin, followed by two women, whose comforter he pretended to be, but whose tyrant he was in reality, came to pay her a visit. She got up, and received them with so devout and composed an air, she would have deceived the most discerning. It was with difficulty that the bramin hindered her from prostrating herself before him; which he did, however, with much innate satisfaction, expressive of his own fancied importance: in short, he seemed so elevated with this testimony of her humility, and even so persuaded, that he was deserving of more, it was impossible not to smile at the holy vanity of this ridiculous personage.

Where



Where persons of such perfect characters formed the conversation, it was scarce possible it should not turn on the frailties of others. Not that scandal is an uncommon topic in the gay world; but being more for the sake of ridicule than the fault, their scandal is rather an amusement; and they are not perfect enough, like others, to make a duty of it. They injure you, indeed, sometimes, but 'tis generally without designing it; and their gay pursuit of pleasure, prevents them from dwelling long on it, or thinking of converting it to their advantage. The sour and morose way of speaking ill of others, pretended to be so necessary to their amendment, and which, but for this plea, would be detestable, is with the light and airy unknown: they——

No more of that, interrupted the sultan, in an angry tone—are you coming again, with your musty reflections? — Please your majesty, answered Amanzei, they are abso-

absolutely necessary on some occasions——  
 I tell you, replied the sultan, it's false; and  
 tho' it were true, what of that? Have you  
 the insolence——in one word, 'tis to  
 me the story is directed, and it shall be told  
 as I like best—I'll be diverted, without any  
 more of your long-winded morals, that give  
 me the megrim——I warrant you are vain  
 of being thought a fine orator! But, as I  
 am a king! I'll soon spoil you for har-  
 ranging——And here, by the honour of a  
 sultan, I swear, that I will sheath my scyme-  
 tar in the heart of the first, who shall dare  
 to make a reflection in my presence——  
 Now you know our pleasure, see that you  
 acquit yourself accordingly.

As reflections have the misfortune to  
 be displeasing to your majesty, answered A-  
 manzei, I will be careful to keep them to  
 myself——That is very well said; now, cried  
 the sultan——proceed.

We never take a pleasure in speaking ill  
 of others, that we do not take as great a  
 one

one in praising ourselves. Fatme, and the company with her, had too good an opinion of their own merit, not to despise all who were not like themselves. While the card-table was preparing, they entered into a conversation, which did not belie their character. The bramin, indeed, began with saying some civil things of a lady of Fatme's acquaintance, which I could see chagrined her. Of all the errors she exclaimed against, love seemed to her the most deserving of censure. If once a woman had made one slip, possessed she otherwise every valuable quality, nothing could save her from the persecution of Fatme; but let her have been guilty of crimes ever so odious and disgraceful to her sex, provided she never had her lover, she spoke of her as a most worthy person, whose virtue could not be enough admired.

The lady the bramin had spoke well of, happened, unluckily, to come within the circumstances, that most excited the indignation

nation of Fatme: Ah! the lost creature! says she, with an ill-natured accent—how can you praise her! The bramin excused himself, saying, he was ignorant of her guilt; and Fatme very charitably informed him of the reasons of her contempt.

O generous patroness of virtue! said one of the women, directing herself to Fatme, how will you be charmed with what I am going to inform you of! Nahami! she, whose conduct we have so often lamented together; even she, frail as she was, has this very instant renounced her levity, and laid aside carmine!—Happy, indeed, cried Fatme, if her change is sincere! But, being good ourselves, how easy, Madam, are we deceived! at least, I have found it so—when one is born with such a rectitude of heart as you are, Madam, we imagine the rest of the world to be like ourselves. But, after all, it is a beautiful error to judge the best of our neighbours—And yet, with regard to Nahami, I cannot help



help having my fears, that a person, so profligate as she has been, will scarcely be able entirely to abandon her long-contracted ill habits. Carmine may be left off much easier than our faults; and very often we put on a reserve and a shew of sanctity, not so much to begin a new life, as to impose on the world, and gratify our appetites with more privacy.

Upon my word, says Sahah Baham, yawning and stretching, this conversation will certainly give me a nap—If you have a mind to see me in a trance, by all means go on with it—I never heard such a pack of dreamers in my life—one would think you would be sick of them yourself——prithee, dispatch them—I submit to your majesty, answered Amanzei—After having exhausted the conversation concerning Nahami, their scandal became general, and in less than a moment, I was acquainted with all the intrigues in Agra. They next entered into high encomiums of  
each

each other, and then sat down gravely to cards. After a good deal of peevishness and avarice during their play, they formally took leave of one another.

Well—I was on thorns, says the sultan, for fear—you have obliged me sensibly—I hope I shall hear no more of those people—may I depend on it?—Yes, please your majesty, answered Amanzei—Very well, resumed the sultan; and, to shew the world I know how to reward the services of my subjects, I create you this instant an emir—I am told you embroider well, and are indefatigable—You will find your account in it—in fine—I delight in these things—we must encourage merit.

The new emir, after having thanked the sultan for the honour done him, proceeded thus: In spite of Fatme's exterior civility, I could perceive, that the late visit was as disagreeable to her, as it has been to your majesty; and that, had she been left to her choice,

choice, she would have employed her time in something more amusing than any thing they had it in their power to entertain her with.

The moment the company was gone, Fatme fell into a profound reflection, that was far from being melancholy. Her eyes were all tenderness——She threw them with the most languishing cast round the room, and seemed with transports to wish for something she had not, or what she was fearful of possessing——At last she called.

At her voice, a lusty young slave entered the cabinet. The eyes of Fatme, where love and desire reigned absolute, were eagerly fixed upon him; and yet she seemed irresolute and timid——At last, said she, all trembling, “Shut the door—come hither, “Dahis—do not be afraid—we are now “alone—I give you leave to remember how “much I love you, and to prove your tenderness to me.”

Dahis, on this, quitted the slave for the more pleasing character of the lover. He had little of the delicate or the tender, but was all brutal vigour, voracious in his appetites, ignorant of the art of protracting them, a stranger to gallantry, incapable of certain sensations, unpractised in the soft preludes of enjoyment; but for the rest, essentially qualified for all the grosser purposes of love. This was not being truly the lover; but to Fatme, who looked for more than address, it was being something more necessary. Dahis was extremely coarse in his praises; but while he continued to give such strong proofs of the power of her beauty, these, to Fatme, were the finest compliments in the world.

Fatme made herself ample amends for the reserve she had put on to her husband. Being now free from restraint, her eyes sparkled with the utmost fire; she caressed Dahis with all the eagerness of an excessive passion; lavished on him every  
endearing



endearing expression in the power of fondness; and, far from endeavouring to conceal herself, she seemed to take a pride in opening her whole soul to him. In the intervals of her rapture, she made him survey the beauties she had exposed to him, and even insisted on fresh proofs of his affection, which of his simple self he would rather have been excused from.

Dahis, however, was not very easily wrought on; his stupid eyes beheld, unmoved, the rarities of Fatme. The impression they made on him was mechanical, his gross soul had no share in it; and an insensibility even reached to enjoyment; but, nevertheless, Fatme had her satisfactions. The silence and stupidity of Dahis, did not clash with her self-love; and as she found him sensible to her charms, it was matter of indifference to her what sensations he might have, or whether she heard not from him the elegant and more wordy transports of a *petit maitre*.

D 2

Fatme,

Fatme, in abandoning herself to the desires of Dahis, discovered she had as little delicacy as virtue, and exacted not from him those flights of rapture, those polite and tender nothings, which, to a refined soul, are superior to pleasure; or in which, to speak more properly, pleasure itself consists.

Dahis, at last, sneaked away, after having yawned more than once. He was one of those happy fellows, who, never thinking, have never any thing to say, and who are much better to be employed than heard.

Whatever opinion the amusements of Fatme had given me of her, I must own, now Dahis had left her, I concluded there remained no more objects for her meditation, and that therefore I should soon see no more of her; but I found myself mistaken: she was a person not so easily diverted from meditations of this kind; nor had she been long left to the reflections of her adventure, which Dahis afforded, before

fore there appeared fresh matter for speculation.

A demure young bramin, of a florid complexion, and one whose gravity, nevertheless, did not efface the sprightliness of his temper, entered next into the cabinet. In spite of his habit, which was not the most becoming, it was easy to see, that he was formed to raise desires in more than one prude. There was not, indeed, a bramin in Agra more admired and followed. He talked, said they, so well! with so much sweetness! had such a winning eloquence, he stole into the very soul, and left a love of virtue there so strong, you could not afterwards go astray. Such was his public character; and we shall soon see whether in private, he deserves the consummate praises given of him.

This happy bramin approached Fatme with a whining preciseness and flat kind of gallantry, though you might perceive he aimed at something more polite; but by

the awkwardness of the imitation, the bramin still peeped through the mask.

“Empress of hearts,” said he to Fatme, with an affected air, “you are more beautiful to day than those happy beings destined to the service of Brama. You elevate my soul to an extacy, which has something in it celestial, and which I could wish you to partake.” Fatme, with a languishing air, answered him much in the same strain; and the bramin replying, the conversation became extremely tender. They were so singular in their phrases, they did not seem designed for the language of love; and if it had not been for their actions, I should have still wanted a key to their discourse. Fatme, who was little affected with the rhetoric of love, and who, in reality, would rather have dispensed even with the eloquence of the bramin, whatever she might say to the contrary, was the first to testify her dislike to empty words. The bramin, who was as little pleased with them



them as she was, presently ceased speaking; and this whining and insipid conversation, ended as that of Dahis had begun.

It is remarkable, however, that Fatme, in doing the same things, was yet more careful of her behaviour, and endeavoured to appear delicate, and actuated only by love in the eyes of the bramin.

The bramin, who pretty much resembled Dahis in person, was not inferior to him in any thing, and merited all the caresses the enamoured Fatme lavished unceasingly on him. After having given a loose to their utmost wishes, they turned virtue into ridicule; diverted themselves with deceiving the world, and gave each other mutual lessons of hypocrisy. These two odious persons at last separated; he to the duties of his function, and Fatme to plague her husband with her usual ill-humour.

During my abode in her house, the amusements of her leisure hours were only

such as I have recounted to your ever-sacred majesty.

Fatme, all-cautious as she was, forgot herself sometimes. As she was one day solacing with the bramin, her husband passing by the door of the cabinet, by accident, over-heard certain expressions and sighs, which greatly astonished him. The public conduct of Fatme was such as left no room for suspicion of her private amusements, and doubtless her husband could scarce guess from whence proceeded the sighs and strange ecstasies he just had heard.

But, whether it was that he fancied he distinguished the voice of Fatme, or that curiosity alone prompted him to it, certain it is, he was resolved to be satisfied of the truth. Unluckily for Fatme, due care had not been taken of the door, and at one push he burst it open.

The spectacle was such, as for some moments suspended his fury. He could scarce believe his eyes, and knew not on what to determine

determine—"Perfidious monster!" cried he, at last, "receive the punishment due to your crimes, and to your hypocrisy."

At these words, without listening to Fatme, or the bramin, who by this time had thrown themselves at his feet, they fell the victims of his just resentment. Shocking as the scene appeared, I cannot say it moved me. The pair were too deserving of death to be pitied; and I was still the less concerned for so dreadful a catastrophe, as it would shew the inhabitants of Agra the baseness of two persons, who so long had been the objects of their admiration as patterns of virtue.

## CHAP. IV.

*Presents you things you possibly little think of.*

**A**FTER the death of Fatme, my soul took its flight to a neighbouring palace, where every thing seemed to have the same aspect as that I had just quitted, but where in reality there was a quite different way of thinking and acting.

The lady it belonged to, was not arrived at that age, in which women even of the best sense, usually ridicule gallantry, however they may not condemn it as a vice; she was young and beautiful, and it could not be said of her, that she practised virtue only because she was not formed for love. She had so unaffected a simplicity, was so private in her charities, and you saw in her so perfect a tranquillity, as forced one to believe she really was what she seemed to be. She was prudent, without constraint; good, without vanity; and made it neither

a pain



a pain, nor a merit to do her duty. Such was the affable meekness of her virtue, that I never once beheld her melancholy, or peevish with those about her; neither did her goodness make her imperious towards others. In this particular, she was much more cautious than some of her sex are, who, with every thing to reproach themselves with, will suffer none to escape their reproach. She had a natural gaiety of temper without levity, which she did not endeavour to stifle. She was not of the opinion of many others, who, by being troublesome in company, think they make themselves the more respected; and what is no less extraordinary, she could amuse herself without scandal. Convinced of her own imperfections, she could easily draw a veil over those of other people. Nothing appeared to her vicious or criminal, but what is really so. She did not deny herself things that are permitted, only to indulge herself, like Fatme, in those that

are forbidden. Her house possessed all the marks of magnificence, without luxury. The most worthy in Agra thought it an honour to be admitted: all were ambitious of the acquaintance of a lady of so consummate a character: she had the admiration and esteem of all; and, in spite of my natural perverseness, I was forced at last to agree in the general opinion.

At first, indeed, I was so prepossessed with the falshood of Fatme, that I suspected very much that the present was only acting some farce; and I confess, that I confounded the woman of virtue with the hypocrite. I never saw a slave or a bramin enter, but I concluded there would be matter of entertainment for me; and you must believe I was not a little astonished, after all, to find I was looked on as a thing of nothing.

Tired, at last, with the neglect I saw myself condemned to, and despairing of making any curious observations here, I  
quitted

quitted the Sopha of this lady, charmed with having been convinced, that there were some virtuous women, at least; tho' I cannot say, I desired much to meet with any more such.

Resuming the active condition of my soul, to vary the scene, I was resolved not to confine my adventures to palaces only; and therefore took my next flight to a house, that I was afraid, at first, would not have afforded me a retreat. It was a little obscure building, where you could not expect to meet with much architecture. I passed into a dismal sort of an apartment; furnished but indifferently; where, nevertheless, I happily met with a Sopha, which was much sullied and hacked, and sufficiently testified that the rest of the furniture was all owing to its merit. These were my first ideas of the house, before I knew to whom it belonged; and after I did know, saw no cause to alter my opinion.

This

This chamber, in effect, served as a retreat to a young thing, tolerably pretty, who being, as well by her birth, as in herself, what they call bad company, often saw, nevertheless, persons that compose, say they, the best. In a word, she was a dancer, who had not long made her appearance on the imperial theatre, and whose fortune and reputation were not yet established, although she was particularly known to all the young lords of Agra, who promised her their protection, and she in return was indefatigable in her endeavours to oblige them. I question, however, after all their fine promises, whether there would have been so sudden an alteration in her fortune, had not the emperor's receiver-general happened to take a fancy to her.

Abdalathif, for that was the name of the receiver-general, was not the most brilliant conquest for her in the world, either by his birth, or personal merits. He was naturally of a clownish brutality, and since his rise  
to



to prosperity, added insolence to his other defects. He disdained to be vulgarly polite; and thinking a person sufficiently honoured in his notice, assumed therefore the more elevated, and distant politeness of persons of a certain rank, which in them, the world is pleased to call dignity, but which in Abdalathif was the height of absurdity and impertinence. Born, as he was, in obscurity, he not only forgot it, but took a deal of awkward pains to prove his illustrious original. He ennobled his meanness by perpetually aping the man of quality. Insolent in freedom, his familiarity was as shocking as his haughtiness; and ignoble in taste, his magnificence became ridiculous. With a moderate capacity, and less education, he fancied he was equal to every thing, and accordingly was for dictating to every body. Such as he was, however, it was necessary to bear with him; not in respect to the man, but for the sake of what it was in his power to bestow.

flow. He was addressed by persons of the first rank in Agra, who were his assiduous flatterers; and even their wives were allowed to pardon the rudenesses he offered to them, and even to leave him nothing to request. Resorted to, as he was, in Agra, he was glad sometimes to break from the too great importunities of the ladies of quality in quest of humbler pleasures, which, though coming from plebeians, are not less pleasures; and which, as he had the insolence to say, were often not more dangerous.

One night, Amine having danced before the emperor, her new protector, Abdalathif went home with her. He cast his eyes disdainfully round her little lodging, and scarce vouchsafing to look on her, "This place is not fit for you, said he—I must have you removed—It concerns me, as well as you, to have you more decently situated—I should be laughed at, if a girl I had thought proper to favour, should not live in a manner to be respected."

“pected.” After these words, he seated himself upon me, and pulling her to him, without any ceremony, he took all the liberties he desired; but being the lover more from mode than desire, he was not very excessive in the use of them.

Amine, whom I had seen behave with so much caprice and vanity to the lords that came to her, far from giving herself any airs of familiarity before Abdalathif, treated him with profound respect, and durst not even look upon him, but when he seemed desirous she should. “You please me very well,” said he to her, at last—“But you must be discreet—careful of your conduct—no freedoms with young fellows—otherwise our acquaintance will be short—So fare you well, my girl,” added he, getting up—to-morrow you shall hear further from me—there is no staying to sup with you, as you are equipped—you shall have every thing necessary—adieu.”

Finishing

Finishing these words, he went out, conducted by Amine, with great formality. She soon returned, and flung herself upon me, prodigiously pleased with her good fortune. Her mother came in at the same time, and they entertained themselves with reckoning up the jewels, and the other fine things Amine had reason to expect the next day from the generosity of Abdalthif.

The mother of Amine, tho' a woman of strict honour, was the most complaisant of mothers: she exhorted her daughter to behave herself with discretion in an affair, that Brama was pleased to throw in her way for her happiness; and, comparing their present condition with that they were going to be blessed with, she made a thousand reflections on the providence of the gods, who never abandoned those who merited their favour.

She then enumerated the several lords who had been the friends of her daughter. "Of what signification," says she, "my  
" dear,



“ dear, has their acquaintance been of to  
 “ you! and yet,” adds she, “ who is to  
 “ blame, but yourself? I have told you,  
 “ over and over, that you are too good-na-  
 “ tured. Indeed, child, your easiness is  
 “ a great fault, and your capriciousness,  
 “ on certain occasions, is fully as ridicu-  
 “ lous. I am far from dissuading you  
 “ from your gratifications——Brama, for-  
 “ bid! I would only have you not to sa-  
 “ crifice so much to them, as to make you  
 “ neglect your good fortune——but, above  
 “ all things, a girl, like you, should not  
 “ give herself up, at any time, to love;  
 “ and, I wish you had not given room for  
 “ any talk on that head——In fine, my  
 “ dear, you are still young, and I hope, it  
 “ is not too late for you to see your error——  
 “ believe me, there is nothing hurts a per-  
 “ son of your condition so much as those  
 “ sort of indiscretions which I have heard  
 “ called, love gratis. When once it is known  
 “ that a girl has the misfortune to make  
 “ a prac- ]

"a practice of resigning herself for nothing;  
 "every one thinks he has merit enough to  
 "be entitled to the same complaisance, or  
 "at least expects to have it on the easiest  
 "terms. Look upon Roxana, Atalis, El-  
 "zira; they cannot be reproached with  
 "such weakness—And accordingly Bra-  
 "ma has rewarded their behaviour—with-  
 "out your beauty, see how rich they are! I  
 "avail yourself of their example—these  
 "are the girls of sense for me!"

"Bless me!" answered Amine, "what  
 "a lecture! one had need to have pati-  
 "ence—Perhaps I may think on't—  
 "But would you really advise me, mother;  
 "to be constant to the shocking creature?  
 "I tell you before-hand, it is impossible."

"Why no," resumed the mother—"I  
 "don't say we can always command our  
 "hearts; I would only have you either en-  
 "tirely to drop your acquaintance with the  
 "lords about court, or, at least to see them  
 "incog.; or that they would behave to you

"with

“with more propriety than they have hi-  
 “therto done. If you incline, I will  
 “speak to them—Indeed, there is your fa-  
 “vourite, Massoud—I have nothing to say  
 “against your choice there.—He is not  
 “known about town—you may act as you  
 “please—He passes for your cousin—no  
 “body suspects the contrary—you are safe  
 “here.—If you stick to him, then, I say,  
 “Abdalathif may be imposed upon as well  
 “other people.”——“And do you think,  
 “mother,” interrupted Amine, “he will  
 “make me all the rich presents he talks  
 “of? bless me! if he should, as I really  
 “believe he will, how I shall shine away!  
 “It is not out of vanity,” added she, “I  
 “say this; but when one has a certain rank  
 “in life, one is glad to be like other peo-  
 “ple.”——On this, she fell to reckoning  
 up the names of the several girls of her ac-  
 quaintance that would envy her, and tell-  
 ing over again the finery she should have;  
 the single thought of which seemed to please  
 her

her more than even the making of her fortune.

Next morning a chariot came to take her away; and being curious to see what use Amine would make of her mother's advice, I followed her. She was conducted to a fine house, ready furnished, in a bye street, belonging to Abdalathif. On her arrival, I went into a magnificent Sopha, placed in a cabinet, adorned with the utmost elegance. Never was poor thing so stupified with wonder, as was Amine, at what she beheld. After gratifying her curiosity in the strictest examination of each particular, she sat herself down to her toilet. The rich vessels she saw it spread with, the casquet of jewels, the slaves obsequious about her, the trades-people, and the workmen that waited her commands, all heightened her transport to such a degree, as quite intoxicated her with grandeur.

When she was come a little to herself, she considered what part she ought to act

in



in this new scene. She began with behaving with haughtiness to her slaves, and with impertinence to her trades-people: she was capricious in her choice, and whatever she ordered, insisted on its being executed the very next day, or sooner. She then sat herself down again to her toilet, where she employed herself for a long time; and, till her rich habits that were making should be finished, put on a magnificent deshabille, which was designed for a princess of Agra, and which she scarce thought good enough for her.

She passed the best part of the day in surveying her new-self, admiring afresh the magnificence about her, and in expectations of Abdalathif. Towards the evening he came. "Well, girl," says he to her, "how do you like all this?" Amine threw herself at his feet, and in the most abject terms thanked him for all his favours.

I, who

I, who had been always accustomed to good company, was not a little surprized at the coarseness of her expressions: not that I had never heard stupidities before, but they were at least pronounced so agreeably, as made one almost forget they were slow and trifling.

CHAP.

## CHAP. V.

*Better passed over than read.*

PREVIOUS to entering into deeper conversation, Abdalathif drew out a long purse full of gold, and flung it with a careless air on the table. “Lay that by,” says he to her,——“you will not have much occasion to use it, for I intend to defray the expences of your house myself, as well as to find you in every thing fitting for you. I have sent you a cook, who, after my own, is the best in Agra. I propose supping here very often; and, that we may not be always alone, I shall sometimes bring with me some lords of my acquaintance, and other men of wit, whom I now and then oblige with lending money. I would have you also to seek out for some agreeable female companions, who may join with us——that may add a

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“gaiety to the table, which I am fond  
“of.”

At these words, he conducted her to a little cabinet, where I was; and the very worthy mother of Amine, who had been present at this conversation, shut the door, and withdrew.

I will not presume, says Amanzei, interrupting himself, to give the whole detail of a conversation so unworthy your majesty's ear. So artful, however, was Amine, that both in her tenderness and transports, none could seem less so. Abdalathif had taken care previously to inform her, that nothing disgusted him so much as certain silly delicacies in point of language. As the desire she had to please him, her education, and the habits she had contracted, all conspired to gratify his wishes, your majesty will easily suggest that there passed discourse too tedious for me to remember, and which, besides, would not afford your majesty any pleasure.

“Why



“Why so?” asked the sultan—“per-  
 “haps now I should like it very well—  
 “and therefore consult yourself a little  
 “about it”—“Amanzei may consult him-  
 “self if he pleases,” says the sultaneß,  
 rising up; “but, as I am certain he cannot  
 “recollect himself so as to give me any sa-  
 “tisfaction, your majesty will not be offend-  
 “ed that I take my leave.”

“What an air of modesty was there  
 “now!” cries the sultan—“And you  
 “think, perhaps, to gall me with it; un-  
 “deceive yourself, pray—I have a pretty  
 “good notion of the women; and I re-  
 “member to have been told by one, who  
 “knew them as well as myself, or therea-  
 “bouts, that they never do any thing with  
 “so much pleasure, as when they are forbid-  
 “den to do it; and that they delight most  
 “in that sort of talk, which is least for  
 “their credit to hear; consequently, I  
 “shall think, if you retire, it is not be-  
 “cause you have really a mind to go—

“But I shall not insist on it—I will wait  
 “till I go to bed, by which means I shall  
 “hear the whole—Hey! Amanzei.”

Amanzei knew better than to contradict the sultan; and, after having commended his majesty's prudence in restraining his impatience, proceeded thus:

After the privacies of Abdalathif and Amine, in which more was said than done, supper was served up. As I was not in the dining-room, I can give no account of their conversation during the repast. The parties returned, however, a good while after; and, though they had supped *tete à tete*, they did not seem to be a jot the soberer. In short, after saying a good many *pah* things, Abdalathif fell asleep on the bosom of Amine.

Amine, all obsequious, as she had hitherto been to Abdalathif, was not at the bottom very well pleased with the great liberties he took with her; nor was her vanity less mortified, to see the little account he  
 made

made of her. The compliments, however, he paid to her at supper, on her manner of supporting the conversation, had given her a good deal more spirit, and she began to fancy herself deserving enough to be answered and talked to. In spite of the gratitude she owed to Abdalathif, she grew weary of the constraint he kept her under, and she would have been imprudent enough to have shewn her uneasiness, but that Abdalathif starting suddenly, with half closed eyes asked her abruptly, what it was a clock! He rose up however, without waiting for her answer—"Farewel, girl," says he, saluting her, magisterially—"I will let you know to-morrow whether I can sup with you, or not."—After these words he was going away; but Amine, however she might wish for his absence, did all in her power to prevent him; and though she carried her affectation even to tears at his departure, he was proof against

them, and broke loose from her arms, saying, "He liked very well she should love him, but that he would not be teized."

When he was gone, she rung her bell, conferring on him, at the same time in a low voice, all the pretty epithets she could think of, and which he merited. While her attendants were undressing Amine, her mother came in, and whispered her—She seemed to be greatly pleased with what was said to her, and she hurried the slaves to have done, in order to dispatch them. She had not been long alone, before her first slave returned, introducing a frightful mishapen negro; but whom Amine had no sooner beheld, than she went with great eagerness to receive him.

"Amanzei," says the sultan, "suppose you had not introduced this same negro, I fancy your history had been full as well"—"I flatter myself," answered Amanzei, "he will not spoil it"—"Yes," "Sir," replied the sultan, "I will shew  
"you



“ you how he will spoil it, since you have  
 “ not the wit to see it—It is notorious, and  
 “ I thank heaven for it! that the first  
 “ wife of my grandfather, Schah-Riar,  
 “ lay with all the negroes of the palace; in  
 “ consequence of which, my said grand-  
 “ father caused not only her, but all his  
 “ other wives, successively, to be strangled,  
 “ till my grandmother Scheherazade, and  
 “ in her the custom ceased. I therefore  
 “ take it as a great want of respect in you,  
 “ knowing what has happened in my fa-  
 “ mily, to mention negroes to me, as if  
 “ I ought to be tame at the insult—I shall  
 “ pass it over, however, since you have  
 “ introduced him; but I charge you let  
 “ me see no more of them.”—Amanzei,  
 after having implored the sultan’s forgive-  
 ness, went on thus: “ Oh Massoud!”  
 says Amine to her lover, “ What have I  
 “ not endured these two days wherein  
 “ I have not seen you! How I detest the  
 “ odious creature that possesses me! and

“how wretched one is to be the most  
“splendid sacrifice of fortune!”

To all this and more Massoud answered little—He said, however, that though he loved her with the utmost delicacy, he did not regret the conquest she had made of Abdalathif; he advised her to make the most of him. Afterwards giving a loose to all the fury of vigorous desire, there commenced a pleasing kind of contest between them, the joy of which was not a little heightened with the thoughts of making a cully of Abdalathif. The greatest part of the night was spent in repeated mutual conflicts. At peep of day, Massoud took leave of the all-contented Amine, who with excess of gratitude thanked him bountifully for his company, and he was conducted out by the same private way, in which he had been introduced, by the mother.

Amine passed the morning trying on the habits she had bespoke, and in ordering others.

others. In this manner she amused herself, till the hour arrived of her dancing before the emperor. She was brought back by Abdalathif, accompanied by some agreeable female companions of Amine, several young omrahs, and three of the most celebrated wits of Agra. There seemed to be an emulation among them in extolling the magnificence of Abdalathif, his taste, the nobleness of his mien, the delicacy of his wit, and the solidity of his understanding. I was at a loss to conceive how persons of birth and capacity could answer it to themselves, to be so mean as to daub him with such fulsome and lying encomiums; which they likewise extended to Amine. But, indeed, they bestowed them in a manner which might have shewn her, that if it had not been from respect to Abdalathif, they would have used her with as much familiarity, as they were now studious to avoid. After these compliments, the company dispersed themselves into parties. The con-

versation was, according to the speakers, sometimes smart, sometimes flat; and, in the course of it, I perceived, that the ladies who were to sup with Amine, were treated pretty cavalierly, and which they did not take any great exceptions at.

At last they went to supper. But my soul being, as I observed before, excluded from dining-rooms, I can say nothing concerning the conversation that passed there. Yet, to judge from the specimen I had seen before, and that which they afforded me after supper, it is a loss I have no great cause to regret. The wine and the encomiums the company lavished on the merit of the cook, put Abdalathif in such spirits, that he was quite intoxicated, and it was not long before he composed himself to sleep. A young lord who had an interest in procuring Amine the privilege of disposing of herself, took the liberty to awake him; representing that a person of his high office, who had the direction of affairs of the last importance,



ance, and could be so ill spared from the public, might sometimes allow himself a few moments to unbend, but should never be wedded to his pleasures; and pointed out so strongly the consequence Abdalathif was of, both to the prince and people, that he convinced him he could not defer a moment longer going to bed, without exposing the state to danger in the loss of its most solid support.

This reasoning had such weight with Abdalathif, that he immediately retired home, and the company went away. By certain looks which I had observed to pass between Amine and the young lord above, I imagined I should soon see them again. For her part, after the company were gone, she ran with a negligent air to her toilet, and being disencumbered from a load of ornament, more troublesome to pleasure, than flattering to vanity, she ordered her slaves to leave her. At the very instant almost, the venerable mother of Amine, who,

doubtless, had taken compassion of the young lord, purely from a sense of his sufferings, and not from the grosser considerations of interest, introduced him with great precaution into the apartment of her daughter; and did not retire till after he had given her positive assurance, on his word, of even not hinting at the least proposition that should derogate from a modesty so consummate as was that of Amine.

“Certainly,” says Amine to the young lord, when they were alone, “I must be hurried on by the most extravagant passion to do what I do! here I am deceiving the most generous of benefactors, whom I ought to be faithful to, at least, though I cannot love him. O dreadful power of love! I am sensible of my fault, yet cannot resist it—O, why wilt thou force me so far out of my usual way of acting!”——“Only to lay me under the greater obligation, my dear,” answers the young lord, going to take her in.

in his arms—"Nay"—replied she, pushing him from her—"I vow I will not suffer this—I promised you my good opinion, my company——If I were to go further, I should be a perfidious, ungrateful wretch, for which I should hate myself."——"Why, my dear soul," said his lordship—"what is come to thee! why all these silly scruples? I swear, I believe thee the honestest creature alive; but of what use is it? dost think I come here for this only?"

"You very much deceive yourself," answered she, "if you think of having any thing else from me. What, though I do not love the lord Abdalathif, it is enough, I have vowed fidelity to him, and nothing shall make me break it."

"Why, this is very well put, my dear," replied the young lord, smiling—"since you have made a vow, child, I have too much respect for it—I am mute—and, for the singularity of the thing, I give  
"you

"you leave to continue in your fidelity—  
 "but, prithee, tell me—have you made  
 "a great many such vows in your life?"  
 "You may jest as much as you please,  
 "my lord," answered Amine, "but real-  
 "ly in that article no body is more scru-  
 "pulous"—"Nay—you don't surprize  
 "me at all," replied he—"you public-  
 "spirited ladies are very scrupulous, to  
 "be sure! and infinitely more so, doubt-  
 "less, than your women of virtue! But,  
 "prithee, no more of this vow—if I must  
 "be plagued with it, let it be an hour or  
 "two hence, and don't make me come here  
 "to pass the night in talking of such  
 "stuff."—"It is true—I own myself  
 "in some sort the occasion of your com-  
 "ing," answered she awkwardly—"but  
 "why did you dazzle one, then, with  
 "your brilliant promises?"—"What a  
 "quickness of wit you have, my dear,"  
 "says he—"the remembrance of them, I  
 "find, had like to have spoiled all--There,"  
 added



added he, pulling out a purse—"there's  
 "what I promised you; I am a man  
 "of honour—You'll find wherewithal to  
 "cure you of your scruples, and release  
 "you of all the vows you have ever  
 "made." "Well—you're very pleasant,  
 "I swear," answered Amine, seizing the  
 purse; "but, after all, you know me but  
 "little—I can assure you, if it was not  
 "more from inclination than"—"Aye!  
 "to be sure," interrupted he—"but to  
 "prove how generous I am, I'll dispense  
 "with your thanks, and the prodigious  
 "inclination you talk of, which I con-  
 "fess had not much weight with me in  
 "the agreement; though I think I pay  
 "you as well as if I had been the first;  
 "and that, you know, is not according to  
 "rule." "As to that," answered Amine,  
 "I think if one makes a sacrifice of one's  
 "fidelity to a person"—"Faith!" in-  
 interrupted he, "if I were to pay thee  
 "only in proportion to that, thou wouldst  
 "have

“have nothing—but, prithee, let us come  
 “to some conclusion—Though you have  
 “an infinity of wit, I must tell you the  
 “conversation begins to flag.”

How impatient soever the young lord was, he could not hinder the prudent Amine from counting over the money he had just given her—It was not, she said, that she suspected his honour, but he might be mistaken himself—In fine, she did not comply with his desires, till she was very sure he had not been deceived in the calculation.

As soon as day began to appear, the mother of Amine came in, and gave notice to the young lord, that it was time to retire. He did not seem much to regard her; but Amine begged him earnestly to consider her reputation. Yet, neither the consideration of that, nor all her entreaties, would have availed, if she had not made him hope, that he should be the favoured he, as often as she could conveniently steal a night from Abdalathif.

Besides

Besides Abdalathif, Massoud, and the young lord, with whom she sometimes kept her word, Amine, refining upon her mother's useful instructions, received indifferently all who thought her worth the purchasing. Bonzes, bramins, imars, men of war, cadis, people of all nations, ranks, or ages; none were rejected; she had an universal compassion for the sighs of all mankind, that came up to her price. True it is, she had not forgot her points of honour, and her scruples, and therefore exacted more from strangers, especially such as she looked on as infidels, than from her own countrymen, and those who professed the same law with herself. She distinguished with extreme nicety in this matter: her complaisance to a Guebre just stood him in ten times as much as it did to a Mahometan, because she happened to have his manner of worship in abhorrence; for she thought very justly, that so much remorse merited this difference in the valuation.

Whe-

Whether Abdalathif depended on his superiority too much, to believe that Amine durst presume to be false to him; or whether he as weakly relied on the protestations she had made of never seeing any body but his own dear self, certain it is, he carried on a long intimacy with her in the most perfect confidence; and, but for an unforeseen accident, not without example however, it is as certain, he might have continued in his credulity to his dissolution.

“O! I take it,” interrupted the sultan—“somebody, to be sure, told him of her infidelity”—“Not so, please your majesty,” answered Amanzei,—“O, no”—resumed the sultan—“now I think again, it was quite the reverse—’tis easy to be guessed—why he surprized her himself.”—“Far from it, please your majesty,” replied Amanzei—“glad would he have been to have come off with such conviction”—“Nay then,” says

Schah-



Schah-Baham, "I must own you have  
 "pozed me—but, after all, what affair is  
 "it of mine? and what business have I  
 "to be plaguing my brains with what  
 "does not concern me?"

CHAP.

## CHAP. VI.

*Not more extraordinary than entertaining.*

THE luckless moment, that was to snatch from Amine all her grandeur, jewels, and riches, was now drawing near; when all her consolation for lost magnificence, would be the remembrance only of a pompous dream, and in the hopes, that Abdalathif, could he reflect, would not be less tormenting to himself.

For some days, I had observed in Amine an unusual melancholy. Her house, at night, was shut close; in the day she saw no body but Abdalathif; and all the letters she received, seemed to bring her fresh subject of vexation. I bewildered myself with endeavouring to guess the occasion of all this, but to little purpose; and at last I was weak enough to believe, that a pungent remorse was the sole cause of that

that anguish of soul she seemed to be overwhelmed with.

The knowledge I had of her character, I confess, ought to have given me other thoughts of her; but, not being able to fathom the real cause of her inquietude, I was insensibly led into the mistake; it was not long before I was undeceived.

One morning, as Amine was at her toilet, taken up with perplexing, thoughtful, melancholy reflections, Abdalathif came in. The crimson stain rose in her cheek at the sight of him; and she was the more alarmed at this unexpected visit, as he was not accustomed to come to her in a morning: in short, her confusion was such, she could scarce speak or look. By the contracted brow of Abdalathif, and the furious glances he gave her from time to time, it was not difficult to see, that he was racked with thoughts, which, probably, she had given too much room for. Amine, doubtless, knew the cause of his anxiety, and therefore

therefore avoided asking any questions concerning it. Abdalathif observed a gloomy silence for a considerable space—at last, said he to her, in sullen irony, “So Madam! “are you not very pretty, do you think? “how innocent too you look to day! and “how pretty it could say, that I was the “bulwark of her fortune, and it would be “as firm to me as a rock—All this is very “fine, is not it, my dear?—But know, “Madam! care shall be taken to place you, “where you will be taught more prudence, and be compelled to your good “behaviour, at least for some time.”

“For heaven’s sake!” answered Amine, with a haughty air, “what’s all this nonsense? you don’t direct it to me, sure! “if so, I would advise you, Sir, to think a “little before you speak.”

The insolence of Amine on this occasion was so unexpected, that it even confounded Abdalathif himself! but his rage prevailing, he made her the keenest reproaches, and



and treated her with all the contempt he thought she deserved. Amine was beginning to justify herself; but Abdalathif, being, doubtless, satisfied of the proof of what he accused her of, very roughly imposed upon her silence.

Amine, however, in spite of his loud complaints, resolved to avoid shewing that she thought they were made on her account; and therefore fell upon Abdalathif, in her turn, with all the violence of female reproach. She taxed him with his injustice, his perfidies; invented many more; and, even proceeded to arraign the miserable choice of his mistresses, and his taste, in every thing; with which she should not however, have upbraided him, she added, but for the extreme concern she could not help expressing for every thing belonging to his interest.

She was, in short, so bare-faced in her impudence, that Abdalathif could scarce restrain himself from losing patience. Amine, perceiv-

perceiving that he was not to be imposed upon by her artifice, nor by her reproaches, and dreading the tragical consequences of the fury she had kindled in him, as the last game she had to play, had recourse to tears and submission, but in vain: Abdalathif was not be moved. Whatever was the cause, I will not say, but never did I see a man so much enraged; moment after moment he was seized with frantic starts of horror, during which, if he did not crush every thing in the house to atoms, it was because it all belonged to himself. This wise consideration prevented a havock, which might have been of ease to him, while his struggles again to restrain himself from committing it, made him the more incensed against Amine. But what most transported him, and swelled his rage beyond all bounds, was the distracting thought, that such a wretch should dare to injure a person of his consideration—This was to him a thing beyond

beyond conception, as well as beyond all his philosophy to support.

Having vented all the impertinence that his fury and his pride alternately suggested, he seized upon every thing in general he had given Amine. She expected, indeed, to be abandoned by Abdalathif, and, while she eyed the moveables about her, she was far from being disconsolate; but when she found herself going to be stripped of all, she strait sent forth a peal of shrieks, and the bitterest lamentations. Her horror trembled, and she throbbed with agony. Her mother coming in, threw herself at the feet of Abdalathif, clung to his robe—besought him—struck her breast—wrung her hands—tore her hair—and hoping, I suppose, to soften him, confessed, that what had happened was all owing to a cursed Bonze!

Far from regarding what was said of the Bonze, it seemed rather to make Abdalathif more determined in his rigour. “Alas!”

added the mother of Amine, very piteously,  
 “we are justly punished for having con-  
 “fided in an infidel. My daughter knows  
 “how much I was against it, and I al-  
 “ways said she would one day feel the  
 “smart of it.”

During all this bustle, Abdalathif hav-  
 ing an inventory of every thing he had  
 given to Amine in his hand, saw the whole  
 restored, article by article. This done, he  
 addressed himself to Amine, with a more  
 composed air: “As to the money I gave  
 “you, I shall not take that; and you must  
 “blame yourself, child, if you have no  
 “more. This mortification, I hope, will  
 “make you more prudent for the future,  
 “and I really wish it may—You are now  
 “at your liberty to go,” added he; “I  
 “have no further occasion for you; and  
 “you may thank heaven, that I have not  
 “carried my resentment further.”

Finishing these words, he ordered his  
 slaves to see the culprits to the door, with



as little emotion at the gross invectives Amine loaded him with, as at the tears he had seen her shed.

The curiosity I had to see the use Amine would make of her humiliation, made me resolve, in spite of my aversion to her manners, to follow her to that obscure habitation, whence Abdalathif had taken her, and to which she now returned, covered with shame, and vexation that she had not had it in her power to ruin him.

It was in this melancholy place that I was witness of her despair, and of the imprecations of her virtuous mother. It gave them, however, some consolation, that they had not lost their all, in the shipwreck they had sustained.

“Well child,” said the mother of Amine, one day, “is our misfortune then so great, that it cannot be retrieved? I grant, that the clumsy creature you enjoyed, was liberality itself; yet are there no others like him you may equally please? Supposing that even you meet with none

“so rich, will you for that reason despair?  
 “No my child—what is wanting in specie  
 “must be made up in number: if four  
 “will not do to counterbalance our loss,  
 “why then have four dozen, or more, if  
 “necessary. You will say, perhaps, all  
 “this is but chance-work: very true,  
 “child; but, till we are superior to every  
 “thing, and afraid of nothing, there’s no  
 “getting the better of misfortune.”

Willing, as Amine might be, to reap  
 the fruits of this sage advice; the anguish  
 she was in, hindered her from putting it in  
 practice so soon as she could have wished.  
 Besides, her adventure with Abdalathif,  
 had given her such a character in Agra for  
 infidelity, that, except the faithful Massoud,  
 whose love was proof against every thing,  
 I saw no company come to her for a long  
 time, but female visitors; these, rather in-  
 deed, to insult over her, than to administer  
 consolation in her misfortunes.

Time, that brings every thing about,  
 wore off, at last, the bad impressions enter-  
 tained

tained of Amine. People began to fancy they saw a change in her, and that the time she had had for reflection must have cured her of her excessive fickleness. Lovers, in consequence, returned—A Persian lord, who was just arrived at Agra, and but slenderly furnished with anecdotes, beheld Amine with admiration, and grew the more passionate, as one of those obliging persons, who generously employ their time in procuring pleasure for others, assured him, that if he had the good fortune to be the taste of Amine, the obligation to him would be the greater, as it would be the first weakness she should have to reproach herself with.

Any other person would have thought the thing impossible; the Persian only called it extraordinary. Fired with the novelty, and excited still more with having ocular proof of the stubborn virtue of Amine, he purchased, on the highest terms, favours, that were now rated at the lowest,

lowest, and which, however, were valued at more than they were worth.

The dirty habitation of Amine, was once more left for a magnificent palace, adorned with all the luxury of India. Whether Amine made a wise use, or not, of her new fortune, I cannot say: grown weary now of fathoming her soul, I went in search of objects more worthy of contemplation, though at the bottom, perhaps, full as contemptible; but, being more refined, the shock was less, and they amused me more.

I therefore took my flight to a house, which, by the magnificence and exquisite taste that shewed itself in every thing, I knew to be one of my favourite retreats, where gallantry and pleasure, and where even the failing itself, disguised under the appearance of love, embellished with every delicacy and elegance, never presents itself but in the most engaging form.

The charms of the beautiful mistress of this palace, added to the soft languish in her



her look, made me imagine I should not long want for amusement: she loved withal and was beloved; was warmly pressed by her lover, and wavering in herself; all which promised still more that I should not always be indifferent to her. Notwithstanding this, I remained some time in her Sopha, without her vouchsafing even once to sit upon me; and, with all the merit and eager desires of her lover, he was yet far from a conquest.

Phenime (for that was the charmer's name) found it hard to resign her virtue; and Zulma, too respectful a lover to be daring, waited till time and assidues should inspire her with sentiments as favourable for him, as those he had expressed for her. I, who saw further into Phemine, could not help wondering, that he knew so little of his happiness. Phenime, it is true, had never confessed her passion; but her eyes perpetually betrayed it. Did he talk to her of the most indifferent thing? In spite

of herself, and even without knowing it, you heard a soft cadence in her tone, and the most melting tenderness stole into her voice. The more she was under constraint before him, the more she shewed her love. There was nothing in her lover, that seemed to her indifferent: she was in pain for him in every thing. Sometimes she would impose silence on him, and in the instant forgetting her commands, continue the conversation she had just before prohibited. Every time she found herself alone with him (and without designing it, perhaps, she gave him numberless occasions) an involuntary emotion of tenderness took possession of her. If in the course of some interesting narrative, Zulma, in a sudden transport, happened to press her hand to his lip, or throw himself at her feet, Phenime was alarmed, but not frightened; complained tenderly of the liberty, but was not angry.

And

“And yet,” interrupted the sultan,  
 “he was not a bit the freer for it?”——  
 “No certainly, Sir,” answered Amanzei;  
 “the more beloved”—— “The more  
 “fool he,” said the sultan; “that I see  
 “plainly——” “Love, Sir, resumed  
 “Amanzei, is never so timid, as when”  
 ——“O yes!” interrupted the sultan  
 again——“Timid! a very fine story  
 “truly! could not the blockhead see he  
 “was only teizing the lady? Had I been  
 “in her place, I would never have seen his  
 “face more—I can tell you that.”

“Doubtless,” replied Amanzei, “with  
 “a vain coquet, Zulma ran the risk of  
 “being discarded; but with Phenime,  
 “who really sought not to be conquered,  
 “his modesty was placed to the account  
 “of merit. Besides, the tenderer he was of the  
 “scruples of Phenime, the surer did he make  
 “himself of the victory. A moment given  
 “by caprice, if it is not critically seized,  
 “never, perhaps, offers itself again; but

“when it is given by love, methinks, the  
 “less haste you make to seize it, the sooner  
 “it will surrender”—“For all that,” re-  
 plied Schah Baham, “I have heard say, that  
 “women do not like people that are slow of  
 “apprehension”—“That may be some-  
 “times” answered Amanzei; “but Phe-  
 “nime was of a different way of thinking,  
 “and never loved Zulma so much, as when  
 “he had been more respectful, even than  
 “she herself had wished him to be”—  
 “But pray tell me,” asked the sultan,  
 “did he use to be often out of his guess?”

“Yes, may it please your majesty,” an-  
 swered Amanzei—“And sometimes so  
 “egregiously as made him appear to be ri-  
 “diculous. One day, for instance, that  
 “Phenime was indulging herself in the  
 “tendrest thoughts of Zulma—had no  
 “idea but for him—O that the dear  
 “creature was here, she cried!—Her  
 “imagination growing by degrees still  
 “warmer, she gave all the marks of a vo-  
 “luptuous



“luptuous disorder, and it was at its cri-  
 “sis, when Zulma presented himself be-  
 “fore her——Her emotions increased; her  
 “colour went and came; and, in fine, she  
 “ceased to blush on seeing him——O!  
 “could Zulma have guessed the cause that  
 “made Phenime blush! Had he but dared  
 “to press her!—But, fancying he had al-  
 “ready offended too much in the innocent  
 “freedoms of the evening before, he em-  
 “ployed himself solely in apologizing, at  
 “a time when she would have been of-  
 “fended at nothing.”

“Ah the buzzard,” cried the sultan!—  
 “It is scarce credible that people can be  
 “so stupid!”——“Let it not surprize  
 “your majesty,” replied Amanzei——  
 “for, since I have been a Sopha, I have  
 “observed more lucky moments lost than  
 “gained. Women, accustomed continu-  
 “ally to conceal their thoughts from men,  
 “are industrious, above all, to dissemble  
 “the springs that move their tenderness;

“and she has little to boast in never having fallen, who owes this happiness less to her virtue, than to the opinion she has had the art to create of it in others.”

“I remember, in the house of a woman esteemed for her exemplary virtue, where I continued a pretty while without seeing any thing, that belied the opinion the world had of her.—True it is, she was far from being handsome; and it must be allowed, that no women are so easily virtuous, as those who want charms. To the plainness of her face, she joined a harsh severity of manners, no less forbidding than her figure. No one had hitherto attempted to soften her heart, and it was thought impossible to make an impression there. By I know not what chance, a man more daring, or more capricious than others, or who had no great opinion of the virtue of women, being one day alone with her, very frankly told her, that he thought her amiable;

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“ble; and tho’ he said it coldly enough  
 “not to be believed, a speech so new to  
 “her made an impression on her. She an-  
 “swered modestly, but with confusion, that  
 “she was not formed to inspire such sen-  
 “timents. He then fell to kissing her  
 “hand; upon which she seemed all per-  
 “plexed and trembled; her colour came;  
 “her eyes began to sparkle; sure tokens  
 “that the disorder was going to be kin-  
 “dled. He renewed his efforts, clasping  
 “her in his arms with transport, and vow-  
 “ing she had raised the strongest passion  
 “in him. I know not what he did, dur-  
 “ing her agitation of mind, that gave her  
 “proof, that what he said was true; but  
 “this rigid modesty began to yield to evi-  
 “dence. Neither do I know the nature  
 “of the proof he offered in order to con-  
 “vince her; but, certain it is, it finished  
 “her defeat. But, whether she was im-  
 “posed on by such strange appearances, or  
 “thro’ very want of strength sunk in these  
 “moments

"moments beneath the weight of her vir-  
 "tue, she scarce had the decency to make  
 "resistance, and yielded with more ease  
 "than even women accustomed to resist  
 "the least. This example, and many  
 "others of the same kind, incline me to  
 "believe, that there are few chaste women  
 "who may not be attacked with success;  
 "and that there are none sooner overcome  
 "than those, who seem the most averse  
 "from love."—But, to return to the two  
 lovers.



## CHAP. VII.

*In which you will find frequent occasions to find fault.*

ONE night, taking leave of Phenime, Zulma asked when he might hope to see her again? As she began to be afraid of him, yet could not live without him, after some hesitation, she said he might come on the next day.

Phenime, sensible of the danger there was in being alone, resolved that his visits should be as public as possible for the future; but, on second thoughts, on the day he was to come, she ordered herself to be denied to all but Zulma. To her this seemed the best; for the less opportunity he had of venting his passion, the more it shewed itself by a thousand different ways, as visible to prying witnesses, as to love itself; and who would chuse to be exposed to malicious constructions? Another reason

son why she thought Zulma least dangerous when alone, was, that then he always preserved the most scrupulous respect, whereas before the world, he was not strict enough: It became therefore absolutely necessary, to see him as seldom as possible before company.

Besides, the poor gentleman drooped to that degree when he could not disclose himself with freedom, that it would have been too barbarous to deprive him of a pleasure she run so little risque in granting.

Phenime determined herself by this sort of reasoning, which, as she imagined at least, was founded in custom and common sense; but it was in reality the dictates of her love for Zulma.

Even on that very day she was strongly tempted to compleat his happiness; but she urged all that prudent women could on the propriety of opposing her inclinations; yet, in common justice, she dwelt upon the  
love

love and constancy of Zulma: His fond readiness to oblige was pleasing to her remembrance; nor did she forget to observe, that he preferred to be rather deceived, than to be dishonourable. Zulma, besides, was young, handsome, had all the *tendre* of the soul: perfections she yet fancied she was not affected by,—but which had the highest influence upon her.

“What occasion was there for all this fuss, in the name of wonder!” asked the sultan? “The woman passes my understanding”——“Eight years virtue”——answered Amanzei——“to be robbed of all the merit of eight years virtue in a minute”——“A very great loss, truly!” cried the sultan.

“To a thinking woman,” answered Amanzei, “it is more considerable than your majesty imagines. Virtue is ever accompanied with tranquillity, and tho’ not very delightful, is yet satisfactory. A woman, happy enough to be possessed  
“ of

“ of it, cannot but behold herself with  
 “ great complacency. Her conscious esteem  
 “ is justified by the deference paid to her  
 “ by others ; and the pleasure she sacri-  
 “ fices, equals not that which results from  
 “ the sacrifice.”

“ O ! pray tell me,” said the sultan—  
 “ do you think, if I had been a woman,  
 “ that I should have been virtuous ?”——  
 “ Really, Sir,” answered Amanzei, some-  
 what amazed at the question, “ I can-  
 “ not say”——“ And, why cannot you”  
 asked the sultan, hastily ?——“ Well—  
 “ is it possible,” said the sultaneſs, “ your  
 “ majesty can ask such questions !”——“ I  
 “ do not speak to you, Madam,” replied  
 he——“ I only want Amanzei to tell me,  
 “ if I should have been virtuous, and I in-  
 “ sist on his giving me a direct answer”——  
 “ I believe, Sir, in the affirmative,” re-  
 plied Amanzei——“ Why, then you are de-  
 “ vilishly mistaken,” returned Schah-Ba-  
 ham——“ I should have been quite the  
 “ reverse.



“ reverse. But, let not what I say” added he, addressing himself to the sultaneſs,  
 “ give you a ſurfeit of being virtuous—  
 “ Do you hear, Madam?—My thoughts  
 “ on this head concern myſelf only, and,  
 “ ten to one, if I was a woman, but I  
 “ ſhould act otherwiſe. Upon theſe ſorts  
 “ of ſubjects, after all, every one thinks as  
 “ he likes; and, for my part, I lay no re-  
 “ ſtraint on any body”—“ Your royal  
 “ maſter,” ſaid the ſultaneſs to Amanzei,  
 ſmiling, “ ſeems to be at a loſs, and I  
 “ dare answer, would be obliged to you,  
 “ if you thought fit to go on with your  
 “ tale.” “ Is not that very pleaſant, now,”  
 replied the ſultan? “ would not one  
 “ think it was I that interrupted it?”

Zulma, reſumed Amanzei, returned on  
 the next day; and tho’ at an earlier hour  
 than Phenime expected him, ſhe gave him  
 to underſtand that he came very late.

“ Dear accusation! heavenly com-  
 “ plaint!” cried he to her, tenderly—  
 “ How

“How happy does it make me!”—Phenime perceived not, till now, the force of what she had said: She fain would have turned it, but knew not which way. Zulma smiled to see her perplexity; and she blushed to see him smile. He threw himself at her feet, and kissed her hand with infinity of ardour. She affected to pull it away; but, finding he made no efforts to withhold it, she quietly resigned it.

To all the tender things that were said by Zulma, Phenime gave no answer; but listened to him with a greediness of attention, for which she would have reproached herself, could she have construed her emotions. Her bosom happened to be a little exposed, and perceiving his eyes to turn that way, she began to adjust her handkerchief; on which, Zulma cried, “Cruel decorum!”

This exclamation was sufficient to make Phenime desist; and she permitted Zulma to enjoy the slender favour, without reserve;

serve; but, that he might not guess it to be from design, pretended that something was wanted to settle her head-dress. Nothing now obstructed the ravished eyes of Zulma from beholding the lovely objects Phe-nime had left vacant. She, in return, gave a loose to the pleasure of being admired by one she loved. Her eyes rolled languishingly on Zulma; the swift ideas magnified her tenderness, and in her attitude she appeared a fair enchanted statue.

“O, the devil,” cried the sultan! “what, could he not see that neither? O! the blunderbuss! the barbarous beast!”

Great, as was the soft confusion of Phe-nime, pursued Amanzei, she yet perceived that her lover's was not less; and equally fearing the emotion of Zulma, and her own, she started suddenly from her seat. He made some efforts to detain her; and not having the power to speak, he endeavoured, by bathing her hands with his tears, to make her comprehend how much he was  
touched

touched with her cruel resolution. This moving incident wrought up Phenime to great tenderness. But love not having yet compleated his conquest, she triumphed over her own, and her lover's desires.

As soon as she had disengaged herself from the arms of Zulma, she made signs for him to rise, which he obeyed. For some time they beheld each other with a profound silence; at last Phenime, breaking it, proposed sitting down to play. Although the motion appeared ill-timed to Zulma, he was far from disputing her will, and prepared to gratify her with as much alacrity, as if he had been the first proposer. This fresh proof of his tenderness, touched Phenime anew; and I saw she was almost ready to ask his pardon for a whim, which now she found to be ridiculous.

Unluckily for Zulma's wishes, his mistress remained not long in these sentiments; for the more tenderly disposed she found herself towards him, the more dangerous she deemed



deemed it now to discover her weakness. She sat down therefore to play, as the best resource to divert strange thoughts. But she soon grew tired, and found how weak a remedy she had chosen against the dear idea of Zulma. She did not, however, believe, that the languor she felt, was owing to him, but attributed it wholly to the dull game she had chosen; and therefore her lover now must chuse some other. Fetching a sigh, he readily complied, and she seemed bursting with the like emotion. But while she struggled to suppress each languishing idea, the charming disorder seemed to increase by opposition, and to take entire possession of her soul. Thus lost in thought, she ascribed her pleased attention to the game, while it was all employed upon Zulma.

The dejected air she observed in him, the deep sighs he heaved, the tears he seemed just ready to shed, and the respect he yet preserved, compleated the dissolving of Phenime's

nime's heart. Devoted to the soft sensation, she fixed her eyes upon him unrestrained; and, whether her confusion, or the looks of Zulma, were too potent for her, she straight reclined her head upon his arm. Zulma beholding her in this kind attitude, fell into a fervour of devotion at her feet, which Phenime was too much taken up to regard, or did not incline to hinder. He took advantage of this enchanting weakness to revel on the hand that was disengaged, which he kissed with a transport superior to what an ordinary lover even proves in the ultimate enjoyment.

Blessed with a favour he had not room to hope for, he sought for further indications of his fate in the eyes of Phenime. Her head was still in the same reclining posture, and gently raising it to view, shewed him the melting fair-one all in tears. A scene so unexpected operated in a similar manner upon Zulma. "Ah! Phenime!" cried he, sending a big emotion from his heart—

"Ah!

“ Ah ! Zulma ! ” answered she, “ what is  
 “ it I feel ! ” At these words, they beheld  
 each other with that tenderness, that fire,  
 those silent languishments, that charming  
 absence to every thing else, which love alone,  
 and the most perfect love can give.

Zulma, in fine, with a voice interrupted  
 by sighs, resumed the conversation. “ Ah,  
 “ Phenime ! ” said he, in a kind of extacy,  
 “ if you at last are touched with my fond  
 “ passion, and yet are fearful to give your  
 “ love plain utterance, Oh ! let those eyes,  
 “ those eyes I adore, divulge the happy  
 “ tidings to my heart.” “ No, Zulma,”  
 answered she—“ let me rather boast in open  
 “ terms, that I love my dearest Zulma,  
 “ instead of taking from him a triumph  
 “ he so well deserves. Yes, that I love  
 “ my Zulma, my mouth, my heart, my  
 “ eyes, my all, shall, and do declare. Oh !  
 “ my Zulma ! tenderest of men ! I knew  
 “ no happiness till now, till this delightful  
 “ moment, that gives me the power to shew  
 VOL. I. G “ you

“you my whole soul.” At accents so extremely passionate, and so little hoped for by Zulma, he was well nigh ready to expire with transport. But in this trance-like delirium, which she had thrown him into, he did not forget, that it was in the power of Phenime to render him still happier. And, though he was sensible that the declaration she had made, authorized a thousand things, which till now he had not presumed to think of, still his respect surmounted his desires, and he chose rather to wait till she was pleased absolutely to decide his fate.

Too well Phenime knew her Zulma, to mistake the motive of his slackened ardor; she for that reason was tenderer than ever; and yielding at last to a flood of soft sensations, she flew to his arms with an impetuosity of fondness, that language and imagination, however strong, can faintly picture.

What truth! what purity in their transports! never had I beheld so affecting a scene!



scene! both were intoxicated, and both seemed lost to reason. Nor were they actuated by that flash of fancy, which it is true creates desire; but by the soft fury, the true delirium of love; so often sought for, so rarely felt—"Ye gods! ye gods!" cried Zulma, from time to time, without the power of uttering more—Phenime pressed her Zulma to her breast, with an eager tenderness;—broke loose to look upon him;—again she clasped him, and again looked on him, exclaiming, Ah! Zulma! how late do I know my happiness!

These words were followed by a sublime silence, which the soul delights in, when language wants expression to convey the more refined affections of the mind.

There was a nameless something still that Zulma wanted. And Phenime, to whom his ardors had rendered it now not less necessary than to himself, far from opposing his desires, yielded a blind obedience to them. He seemed more enterprizing, and

she to be more passive: the more she had resisted, the more she thought it to be her duty to yield to him the purchase of her resistance; and thereby to make him a sort of satisfaction for all the various conflicts she had given him. She would now have even blushed to allay or impede his pleasure by a false delicacy, which, by blending remorse and love together, leaves in the midst of the blessing a greater yet to wish for. The sincere, the enraptured Phenime would have thought it an injury to her Zulma to rob him of any the least endearments he was the inspirer of. She met his caresses, therefore, with an ardor inexpressible. And as some minutes before she made a merit of resistance, it was now her whole ambition to convince him of her complacency.

In one of their short intervals, which they filled with a thousand tender transports, said Zulma to his Phenime, with a dying fondness, "You have shewn such strong sincerity through all your conduct, that,

"that, fearful as I was, I could not help  
 "discerning sometimes that you needs  
 "must love me: say why, then, Phenime,  
 "did you delay so long the declaration?"  
 "Quickly did my heart determine for my  
 "Zulma," answered Phenime; "but still  
 "my fears long opposed my wishes. The  
 "more I found myself capable of sincerity  
 "in love, the more I dreaded to engage my-  
 "self: and, without that passion, I should  
 "have exacted more tenderness than I was  
 "capable of inspiring. You alone have  
 "given me a proof, that there are men yet  
 "capable of love: you had won my heart,  
 "but had not triumphed over it. Yes,  
 "I will own, my Zulma! the virtue which  
 "to-day I sacrifice to you with so much  
 "pleasure, has long held out against you.  
 "I could not bear the thoughts, to be  
 "robbed of it in one frail moment; of the  
 "sweet certainty of reigning in my beauty,  
 "and of being beloved. Oh! Zulma!"

added she, pressing him to her arms, "how  
 "hateful do you make me to myself, to  
 "have lost so many moments without giv-  
 "ing you fresh proofs of my tenderness!  
 "can I have been this unrelenting creature!  
 "and have I been the cruel cause of your  
 "desponding tears! no—no—They were  
 "not such as you have shed to-day! O!  
 "pardon my conduct! I was then more  
 "wretched than yourself—yet still, my  
 "Zulma! I must still reproach myself for  
 "daring once to think, that every happi-  
 "ness was not comprized in you, and  
 "that in possessing you, I should not pos-  
 "sess every thing. Blessed in your love,  
 "how could I have other thoughts!—  
 "Can you after this think me worthy of  
 "your esteem?"

Your majesty will easily suggest the con-  
 sequences of such a conversation, continued  
 Amanzei—And how attentive soever I was,  
 it would be impossible for me to call to  
 mind



mind the discourse of lovers of such boundless passions; who were so quick in their questions, and so speedy in their answers; and whose unconnected ideas, in their soul's disorder, must lose greatly of their force by colder repetition, and cannot be near so agreeable to others, as they were to themselves. I was not less surprized at the excess of their passion, than to observe the expedients they found for continuing it. They did not part till very late; and scarce had Zulma left his mistress, before Phenime, whose every moment was sacred to him, sat down and wrote to him. Zulma returned early on the next day, with more desire, and more tenderly beloved, to pass the most charming moments, at Phenime's feet, or in her circling arms. In spite of my propensity for local change, I could not resist waiting to see of what continuance their loves would be; and this curiosity detained me well nigh a year, when, finding their passion so far from diminishing, that

it seemed every day to acquire new strength, and that to the most delicate and most ardent flame, they added both confidence and friendship in equal proportions, I went elsewhere to seek for my deliverance, or to divert myself with newer pleasures.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VIII.

QUITTING the palace of Phenime, I repaired to a house, where meeting with such things only, as from their meanness are not worthy regard or description, I stayed not long. I was several days without finding, in the different places my restless condition, and my curiosity led me into, any thing that was new, or particular enough to engage my attention. Here, one female fell through her vanity; there, caprice, interest, constitution, and even indolence itself, were the sole motives to the frailties of others. I frequently met with that sudden, transient emotion, which is honoured with the name of taste; but nowhere did I observe that love, that delicacy, that voluptuous fondness, which so lately had been my admiration, and my delight.

Tired of the vagrant life I led, and convinced, that our most favourite desires are often such as are least pleasing to us in the end, I began to grow impatient at my fate, and ardently to wish for the happy moment that was to put a period to the punishment I was condemned to.

“What abandoned manners!” did I use to cry—“Certainly, Brama! the omniscient Brama! has flattered me with a vain hope! he could not think it possible, in this licentious age, when pleasure, and a contempt for established principles govern all in Agra, that I should ever find two persons such as he required, as the condition of my new existence!”

Full of these mortifying reflections, I transported myself into a house, that bore the aspect of a very peaceful mansion, kept by a single lady of about forty years of age. Though she was yet handsome enough to entertain the thoughts of love without making herself ridiculous, she was prudent;



prudent; she shunned noisy pleasures; saw little company; and seemed less to have sought an agreeable society, than to converse with those persons, who by their age, and the nature of their professions, might secure her from censure: there was not, indeed, a house of less gaiety in Agra.

Among the gentlemen who visited her, him whom she saw with most pleasure, and who quitted her least, was a person pretty much advanced in years, grave and reserved in his behaviour, more yet by constitution than by habit, though he was at the head of a college of bramins. He was rigid, and inveterate against pleasures; and was of opinion, that indulging in the least of them, would damage the soul of the wisest of men. By the austerity of his temper, and the gloominess of his aspect, I took him at first for one of those, who are more hypocritical than virtuous; inexorable to others, and indulgent to themselves;

and who inveigh with bitterness in public against the vices they give a loose to in private.—In short, I took all his pretended sanctity for grimace, and the surfeit I had taken to these sort of people on Fatme's account, did not a little contribute to make me think so. Though I was seldom mistaken in my conjectures of these over-solemn faces, I found myself deceived with regard to Mocles (for so this bramin was called) and when I knew him better, I had reason to alter my opinion. His soul was pure, and his virtue undissembled: all Agra looked on him to be a better man than he chose to be thought: no one doubted that his aversion to pleasure was real, and, however strict in his principles, he deviated not in his practice. They had the same favourable opinion of Almaide, (that was the name of the lady at whose house I was.) The strict friendship between Mocles and her, however apt the world is to censure the inti-

Intimacies of persons of a different sex, gave not the least suspicion to their disadvantage. There was no body but what respected their union, and looked on it as founded on the mutual love of virtue.

Mocles came every evening to Almaide; and, whether they were in company, or alone, their actions and their conversation were alike irreproachable. Their general topics were on points of morality; and Mocles, in these discussions, always took care to display extensive knowledge, and the rectitude of soul he professed. What a good deal displeased me, was, that persons so superior to others, and who had such command over their passions, should not be superior to the pride they seemed to take in mutually setting themselves off as the models of their age: not satisfied with a bare compliment, they used to undertake each other's panegyric with a fulsome complaisance and vanity, that did not well agree with their rigid virtue.

How

How tiresome soever this dull formality was to me, I resolved to stay here for some time. Not from any expectation I had of being diverted, or of finding my deliverance; for the more I thought Almaide and Mocles perfect enough to be the instruments to effect it, the less I could expect to see them yield to frailty. But being tired of my late excursions, disgusted at the world, and reflecting with horror how abandoned I had been, morality was become less disagreeable to me. But, whether from the novelty of the thing, or from any advantage I proposed to myself in my present situation by hearing a little of it, I will not determine.

“ O save me !” cried the sultan——“ I  
 “ don’t wonder at my growing so drowsy  
 “ all at once——I see what it is you are  
 “ coming to——But, to cut the matter short,  
 “ and that you may not be tempted to shew  
 “ your eloquence, or your memory, I repeat  
 “ the



“ the menace I made with such sage precau-  
 “ tion at the beginning of your tale. If  
 “ I were less merciful, I should let you  
 “ proceed—you that love to hear your-  
 “ self talk so much, I should soon have  
 “ you under the penalty—but I hate  
 “ treachery; and therefore I condescend  
 “ to tell you once more, that nothing is  
 “ so prejudicial to my health as morality.”

Notwithstanding, resumed Amanzei, the  
 consummate virtue of Almaide and Mo-  
 cles, in the heat of their morality, they  
 were sometimes a little too particular in  
 their descriptions of vice. Their inten-  
 tions were doubtless good, but they were  
 not the wiser for dwelling so minutely on  
 what insensibly conveys ideas dangerous to  
 the imagination and the passions.

Almaide and Mocles, who either felt no  
 such perilous consequences, or thought  
 themselves superior to them, were yet a  
 little too presumptuous in their dissertati-

ons

ons on the tender passion; though it must be owned, after having displayed all its charms in the most lively colours, they did not fail likewise to set forth all the shame and horrors attending it. They agreed too, that true felicity was only to be found in virtue; but asserted it very concisely as a truth too well known to be controverted. They were not quite so laconic in their enquiries concerning the frail pleasure. On that dear topic how they enlarged, and dwelt on the most delicate passages with a confidence, that gave me hopes they would one day or other become the dupes of it.

For a month at least, to speak within compass, they entertained themselves every night with these lively descriptions, which I thought so little became them. Whatever subject they began, they were sure to end in that, which they ought to have avoided. Mocles, whose temper grew insensibly softened by these discourses, paid his visits to Almaide earlier than usual,  
took

took more pleasure in them, and departed later. Almaide, on her part, expected him with more impatience; saw him with more satisfaction, and heard him with less interruption. Whenever Mocles found her engaged in company, he appeared under a good deal of awkward perplexity, nor was the same thing less visible in Almaide. When they were left alone, I could observe in their faces that joy which two lovers feel when they see themselves at liberty to give a loose to their tenderness, after having been interrupted by some long unseasonable visit. They met with more eagerness; complained of being too much teized with company, and behaved to each other with the utmost complaisance; much in the same language, but in a different tone. They lived, in short, in a familiarity that could not fail to carry them the greater lengths, as they began to confound themselves upon the article that was the source of their friend-

friendship, or (as I rather think) what they had not a compleat knowledge of.

One day Moeles launching into high encomiums on the virtue of Almaide, "For my part," said she, "it is not at all strange, that I have preserved my chastity: in a woman, prejudice of education is a great aid to virtue, but, in a man, it destroys it. In you, it is a kind of stupidity not to be gallant; in us, it is a fault to be so. In vouchsafing therefore to praise a person of my turn of thinking, you certainly deserve the more of her esteem." "If I were not to examine your position with all the strictness of reasoning required to see things as they really are," answers he, with great gravity, "one should be apt to be imposed on, and imagine, that I am, in effect, more worthy of esteem than yourself. It is easy for a man to resist love, while every thing exposes the women to it: if they are not



“not prompted by tenderness, they are  
 “by constitution. Besides these two  
 “springs, which occasion so many and  
 “great disorders in the world, they have  
 “their vanity to undo them, which in be-  
 “ing the source of their frailty, is not the  
 “less excusable for being so common. But  
 “a more terrible misfortune still to them,”  
 added he, sighing and lifting up his eyes to  
 heaven, “is the perpetual want of employ-  
 “ment in which they languish away their  
 “lives. It is this fatal indolence, that  
 “engenders dangerous ideas; the imagi-  
 “nation, naturally vicious, adopts and  
 “extends them. The passion having tak-  
 “en root, spreads its empire over the  
 “heart; or, should it not partake of the  
 “disorder, these pleasing visions of volup-  
 “tuousness dispose it for every weakness.  
 “When alone, and abandoned to all the  
 “warmth of her imagination, she pursues  
 “a chimera her idleness produced; and,  
 “not to be interrupted in the imaginary  
 “enjoy-

“ enjoyment, dismisses every good thought;  
 “ that would make her blush at her illu-  
 “ sions. The less real the object is, that  
 “ seduces her, the more unnecessary it is,  
 “ she thinks, to resist it: all is hush—no  
 “ busy overlooking eye—she only is wit-  
 “ ness of her own weakness—what has  
 “ she then to fear?—but will this heart,  
 “ she rears up in tenderest thoughts;  
 “ these passions, she thus habituates to vo-  
 “ luptuous ideas; will they always be sa-  
 “ tisfied with illusions only? suppose even  
 “ that she meant not to prejudice her vir-  
 “ tue worse, were she to see a fond, and  
 “ eager lover, sighing, in tears and trans-  
 “ ports at her feet, perhaps too in one of  
 “ the tenderest moments within herself,—  
 “ could she well hope to find in a heart  
 “ thus softened, those principles, which  
 “ alone could make her triumph over so  
 “ dangerous a moment?”

“ Ah! Moccus!” cried Almaide,  
 blushing—“ how hard is the practice of

“ vi-

“virtue!”——You, of all the world,”  
 answered he, “have the least reason to  
 “say so—with every charm to please, and  
 “born to taste of every pleasure; you,  
 “Madam, have made a willing sacrifice  
 “of all to virtue, which in these times  
 “is now commonly sacrificed for the  
 “merest trifles”——“I am far from  
 “thinking,” replied she, with great mo-  
 desty, “that I am arrived at the perfec-  
 “tion which I ought; but I may truly  
 “say, I have always kept a strict watch  
 “upon myself, and more especially dread-  
 “ed that fatal indolence you speak of,  
 “and those wicked books, and those pro-  
 “phane shews, which only serve to mol-  
 “lify the soul.” “True,” resumed he—  
 “and I agree, that it is to the continual  
 “care you take to employ yourself, you  
 “chiefly owe your virtue. I find it to  
 “be so in myself. Nothing so much in-  
 “flames the passions as idleness; and, if  
 “this has such effect upon man, who is  
 “born

“born with less weakness, judge how  
 “much stronger it must operate upon  
 “your sex!”—“I grant,” answered she,  
 “we have every thing to combat with”  
 —“Infinitely more than we,” replied  
 he—“Besides,” proceeded Mocles, “it  
 “is to be considered, that women are the  
 “persons always attacked; and none of  
 “them except such as are past shame, will  
 “have the boldness to begin the attack,  
 “and employ that artillery against the  
 “men, which our sex employ every day  
 “against yours with so much success.  
 “Add to all their various arts, example.”—  
 “Nay,” interrupted she, “in that, I am  
 “certain, we have not the advantage of  
 “you: example should rather have the  
 “greater weight with you, as you are  
 “invaders by custom.” “That is not  
 “strictly true with every one,” answered  
 he, “since there are a great many men,  
 “who by their characters cannot indulge  
 “this frenzy of the soul, commonly call-  
 ed



"ed the pleasure of love; and that, for in-  
 "stance, is my case." "If it were not,"  
 replied she, "happily born, superior to  
 "your passions."—Here Mocles lifted up  
 his eyes to heaven, fetching a heavy  
 sigh—"You seem disturbed," continued  
 Almaide—"If you, O, Mocles! are not  
 "satisfied with yourself, who shall pre-  
 "sume to be so? Can you have known,  
 "then, what it is to love?" "Yes"  
 answered he, hanging down his head, and  
 fetching another great sigh—"The de-  
 "claration is sufficiently humbling to  
 "me; but it is what I owe to truth; al-  
 "though it is as true, that I have not  
 "yielded to the dire temptation. In own-  
 "ing to you, that sometimes I have great-  
 "ly struggled with myself, I know I  
 "shew a weakness, which, by your sur-  
 "prize, I see you did not think me capa-  
 "ble of. But in thus candidly unde-  
 "ceiving you from a mistake, which was  
 "favourable to me, I am fearful of in-  
 "creasing

“creasing the good opinion you are pleased to have of me; for it is less mortifying to be tempted, than it is glorious to resist the temptation. In making you the repository of my weakness, I am obliged to mention my triumph. What I lose on one side, indeed, I seem as willing to regain on the other; and I hope you will not attribute the acknowledgment I make, to pride, which is purely the effect of my abhorrence of falsehood.”

Finishing this modest discourse, Moses, with great humility, hung down his pious head. “Alas!” said Almaide to him hastily—“there is no manner of danger in your divulging this to me—I know you too well—and you have been strangely tempted? Nor am I surprized at it—in vain do we labour after perfection! there is no attaining it.” “What you say is but too unhappily exemplified,” answered he—“Alas!” cried

cried she, "with a great groan—can you  
 "imagine then I have superior cause to  
 "boast of myself, and that I am exempted  
 "from a weakness which you even re-  
 "proach yourself with!"—"How,"  
 cried he to Almaide—"not you ex-  
 "empted?"—"I have too much con-  
 "fidence in you to conceal any thing from  
 "you," resumed she; "and I will own,  
 "that I have had severe trials to struggle  
 "with. What has a long time surprized  
 "me, and what, even now, I cannot com-  
 "prehend, is, that this disorder, which  
 "inflames the passions, and puts them in-  
 "to such confusion, should even be invo-  
 "luntary in us. An hundred times it  
 "has seized me in the midst of the most  
 "serious duties, when one would natural-  
 "ly think it should have had little access  
 "to the soul. Sometimes, indeed, I have  
 "been happy enough to resist its assaults:  
 "but at other times, in spite of myself,  
 "they have triumphed, got the better of  
 VOL. I. H "my

“ my imagination, and subdued all my fa-  
 “ culties. That these shameful emotions  
 “ should ravage a soul, that finds no  
 “ other happiness beyond indulging itself  
 “ in them, is not what surprises me; but  
 “ I should be glad to know, when a per-  
 “ son takes every virtuous and rigid me-  
 “ thod to suppress them, why she shall  
 “ nevertheless be susceptible of their im-  
 “ pressions?”

“ What is called wisdom,” answered  
 Mocles, “ consists much less in not being  
 “ tempted, than in knowing how to resist  
 “ temptation; and there would be little  
 “ merit in being virtuous, if there were  
 “ no obstacles to surmount in order to be  
 “ so. But, since we are upon this head,  
 “ pray oblige me with one word—you  
 “ are now at an age, in which the blood,  
 “ flowing with less rapidity through the  
 “ veins, renders us less susceptible of de-  
 “ fire, are you still subject to those dread-  
 “ ful moments?” “ I am,” replied she;

“ only



“only the assaults are not so frequent.”

“Even so it is with me, too,” answered he, with a deep sigh.

“But, after all,” said Almaide, blushing, “we are guilty of great folly in talking as we do—this sort of conversation is not becoming us.”——“I wish, every thing considered, that we may not have a great deal to fear from it,” answered Mocles, with a smile of confidence

——“It is right, to be distrustful of ourselves, but it would be having, me thinks, too bad an opinion of our virtue, to fancy ourselves so very susceptible! I grant, that the subject we are upon, necessarily leads us to certain frail thoughts; but there is a wide difference in discussing a point for the sake of information, and in entering upon it from vicious views only. As therefore we are perfectly satisfied of the purity of each other’s motives, I believe we may safely rely on them for our

“ tranquillity. You must not imagine,  
 “ that what is seducing to the people of  
 “ the world, will make the same impres-  
 “ sions on us. Persons of the strictest  
 “ virtue are sometimes forced into such  
 “ sort of subjects, and, after the nicest  
 “ discussion, their innocence remains as  
 “ perfect as before. The subjects of  
 “ themselves are nothing. But every  
 “ thing is an object of corruption, to a  
 “ corrupted heart; as things the most op-  
 “ posite in appearance to wisdom, have no  
 “ power over men of sense, who look fur-  
 “ ther than for mere matter of delusion.”  
 “ It must be so, since you have said it,”  
 answered she.—“ and I should think it  
 “ even a crime in me to withhold my con-  
 “ viction after the solid arguments you  
 “ have urged.” “ Well then”—conti-  
 nued Mœles—“ shall I tell you a strong  
 “ piece of curiosity by which I am at this  
 “ instant actuated, but which I believe  
 “ you will scarce be able to guess? I he-  
 “ sitate

“ hesitate a little indeed at the question I  
 “ am going to ask ;—and yet I should be  
 “ glad to know, methinks, whether you  
 “ was ever asked a certain question in your  
 “ life? And whether, in short, to give  
 “ my curiosity full scope, you never have  
 “ experienced the soft tumult of the soul,  
 “ voluntary, or otherwise?”

Almaide, who was not prepared for such  
 a question, seemed greatly confounded;  
 she coloured, and continued a good while  
 in suspense. At last, breaking silence in  
 behalf of the querist, “ why yes,” said  
 she, awkwardly,—“ since you must know,  
 “ I will own to you, without reserve,  
 “ that, in spite of my aversion to the sex,  
 “ I was well enough pleased one day with  
 “ a young rattle, who finding me alone,  
 “ said abundance of those fine things to  
 “ me, which men think it their duty to  
 “ say to us women, before we arrive at  
 “ that happy age, which entitles us to  
 “ their respect only, and are miserable  
 H 3 “ enough

“ enough to have persons only to expose  
 “ us to their desires. I answered him still  
 “ according to the maxims which I had  
 “ prescribed to myself. But, far from  
 “ being restrained by what I said, he  
 “ thought I behaved rather to make him  
 “ exert his talents, than from any real de-  
 “ sire in me to oppose his conquest; and  
 “ had even the assurance to tell me, he  
 “ was certain I should love him. You  
 “ will easily imagine I presently undeceiv-  
 “ ed the vanity of the coxcomb. I don’t  
 “ know what sort of women it was he  
 “ usually conversed with, but certainly  
 “ they had not taught him to behave with  
 “ respect; for, without giving me the least  
 “ warning, he took me hastily up in his  
 “ arms, and flung me backwards like a  
 “ brute on a Sopha——spare my tongue  
 “ the rest, which would do violence to my  
 “ modesty, and might revive dangerous  
 “ ideas—let it suffice that you know”—  
 “ No”—interrupted Mœles, hastily—  
 “ You



“ You must tell me all — It is not so  
 “ much, I see (yes, I see it, and I tremble  
 “ for you) it is not so much out of fear of  
 “ inflaming your passion, or offending  
 “ your modesty, that you are silent, as  
 “ through shame of acknowledging your  
 “ too great weakness. And yet this mo-  
 “ tive, far from being praise-worthy, can-  
 “ not be too much blamed. Let me sub-  
 “ join too, that, taking it for granted,  
 “ you are afraid the recital I exact should  
 “ throw you into dangerous emotions, you  
 “ cannot, even in that case, suppress, or  
 “ palliate a tittle without a crime. Is it  
 “ then of little consequence to you to be  
 “ ignorant of the power of certain ideas  
 “ over you? and will you presume to rely  
 “ on your strength, when you have not  
 “ made trial of yourself? by thus conti-  
 “ nually flattering your soul, will you re-  
 “ main in perpetual ignorance of its force?  
 “ believe me, Almaide, we are never fear-  
 “ ful enough of a danger we are strangers

“ to; and we frequently fall by placing  
 “ too great confidence in ourselves. You  
 “ cannot then dwell too circumstantially  
 “ on your history. It is from the effect  
 “ each passage will have upon you at pre-  
 “ sent, that you will be enabled to disco-  
 “ ver the progress you have made towards  
 “ virtue; or, (which is still more essen-  
 “ tial) what yet remains in you to root  
 “ out, in order to attain that fixed aver-  
 “ sion to pleasure, which alone consti-  
 “ tutes a virtuous person.”

This doctrine, from the mouth of Mo-  
 cles, surprized me a good deal. I knew  
 his integrity and his learning, and I could  
 not immediately conceive the occasion of  
 reasoning in a manner so much the reverse  
 of his principles. What! cried I, with  
 amazement! can this be Moeles! the  
 sage Mocles, who is advising Almaide to  
 dwell on particulars, that offend against  
 modesty, and stir up unchaste ideas in the  
 mind? Being desirous to account for the  
 motives

motives of so sudden a change in Mocles, I beheld him very attentively for some time, and observing him in a very odd way, both as to gesture and looks, I began to think I might possibly find my deliverance in a place, where I had least reason to expect it.

While I was indulging myself in these fond wishes, founded as well on their virtue, as on the uncommon confusion they both began to exhibit, Almaide continued her narrative.

## CHAP. IX.

*Wherein you will find an important question  
left undecided.*

“WELL—I will pay to you then  
“a blind obedience,” replied Almaide to Mocles: “You have convinced  
“me it was vanity alone that made me  
“silent, and you shall see me punished for  
“it, by my exposing to you every the most  
“mortifying circumstance of my story,  
“without disguise.

“I told you, I think, that this rash  
“youth flung me backwards on a Sopha;  
“and, before I could recover myself from  
“my surprize, he threw himself impetu-  
“ously upon me. Though the excess of  
“my confusion hindered me, in a manner,  
“from expressing my resentment, he saw  
“it sufficiently in my eyes; and, for fear  
“of my crying out, found means to pre-  
“vent



"vent it, by stopping my mouth in the  
 "most audacious manner. I cannot de-  
 "scribe the horrid shock this gave me at  
 "first; but, I own, my indignation was  
 "not of long duration: too powerful na-  
 "ture instantly conveyed the brutal kiss  
 "to the inmost recesses of my heart; on  
 "a sudden wild sensations blended them-  
 "selves with my rage, and the latter ex-  
 "erted itself but faintly. My senses were  
 "all in tumult; a fire, uncommon, rush-  
 "ed through all my veins; and, hurried  
 "on by I know not what strange impulse,  
 "pleasure, even amid reluctance, took  
 "entire possession of my soul. All my  
 "loud cries dwindled into gentle sighs:  
 "in spite of my rage, and grief, resistance  
 "now was vain; and, wanting strength  
 "for self-defence, I only could bewail my  
 "dreadful situation."  
 "Dreadful, indeed!" cried Moles:  
 "and so, what followed?" continued he,  
 "with eyes all enflamed. "How shall I  
 "tell

“ tell you !” resumed she : “ as long as I  
 “ was able, and could speak, I loaded him  
 “ with reproaches, which were, perhaps,  
 “ the pure effect of custom. If I mistake  
 “ not, too, I treated him with the most  
 “ indignant scorn : I say, if I mistake not,  
 “ for I dare not to affirm it. In propor-  
 “ tion, as the wild disorder increased, I  
 “ felt my anger and my strength dimi-  
 “ nish. At last, a dizzy kind of confu-  
 “ sion seized my every sense ; and yet, I  
 “ did not, after all, surrender : But, what  
 “ resistance could I make ! alas ! how  
 “ faint ! and yet, how faint soever, it cost  
 “ me some struggles. I never think upon  
 “ this circumstance, O Moeles ! but with  
 “ horror ; and, even now, the confusion  
 “ which the remembrance gives me, is as  
 “ present to me, as if I yet were fighting  
 “ in the rash one’s arms. Ah, Moeles !  
 “ what a dreadful moment for my virtue !  
 “ with the highest notions of the charms  
 “ of that dear innocence, which now was  
 “ at

# T H E S O P H A

" at the spoiler's mercy, and dreading,  
 " even in my soul's disorder, nothing so  
 " much as losing it, how could the plea-  
 " sure be *such a pleasure to me?* With such  
 " fierce fears about me, why did they not  
 " instantly snatch me from the pleasure?  
 " and why did the pleasure still leave in  
 " my heart such empire over my virtue?  
 " I wished (but with what difficulty did I  
 " wish it!) some help might come; and  
 " save me from impending danger: I had  
 " no sooner formed the wish, but a con-  
 " trary emotion, acting upon me with ex-  
 " tremity of violence, and less displeasing  
 " than the former, made me more vehem-  
 " mently desire, that nothing might now  
 " oppose my absolute defeat. In blessing  
 " at what I felt, I wanted to feel more:  
 " without a notion of new pleasures, I  
 " eagerly wished for them, till the impe-  
 " tuous ardor began to be too painful, as  
 " well as too fatiguing for the senses."  
 " *But, Lord,*

“ Sunk, as I was, in every soft idea, I  
 “ had not yet been able to silence an im-  
 “ portunate monitor within my breast,  
 “ who, though hitherto unsuccessful, was  
 “ yet reproaching me with all my weak-  
 “ ness, when the still more audacious  
 “ youth, observing, I suppose, the im-  
 “ pressions he had made upon me, and, re-  
 “ solving to take advantage of them, car-  
 “ ried his outrage to the utmost height.  
 “ He—But how shall I express what I still  
 “ blush to think of! Having been taken  
 “ up as much as my confusion would per-  
 “ mit, in defending myself against his  
 “ fierce, reiterated kisses, I was not in  
 “ other respects prepared for new attacks.  
 “ Spite of my cruel situation, however,  
 “ this fresh insult awakened all my fury;  
 “ but, ah! too yielding me! it did not  
 “ last; a sudden turn redoubled my disor-  
 “ der; and, whether struggling to break  
 “ loose, or, at least, to discompose him,  
 “ all, all contributed to soften me to ruin.

“ Lost,



"Lost, at the last, in wondrous transport,  
 "and in nameless bliss, I could no more,  
 "but fell, devoid of motion, into the arms  
 "of the cruel he, who had offered me such  
 "gross indignity." *et gemitu cecidit*  
 "How do I pity you, and how dread  
 "the sequel," cried Mocles! "You  
 "have no cause; it was not such as you  
 "imagine," answered Almaide. "While  
 "I was in this situation, which I had so  
 "much the more reason to fear, as I fear-  
 "ed not any thing, my enemy suspended,  
 "on a sudden, his attempts, and all his  
 "fury ceased. By what strange prodigy  
 "this was wrought, I never could disce-  
 "ver, and which, indeed, is so surpass-  
 "ingly wonderful, as you, perhaps, will  
 "scarcely give credit to. In the very instant  
 "when I had nothing to oppose him, and,  
 "when he seemed just ready to seize upon  
 "the lucky crisis, his eyes, whose lustre  
 "and expression I could not, even now,  
 "withstand, changed all at once; a kind  
 "of

of languor took place of fury; he  
 seemed abashed, and taking me in his  
 arms with more tenderness, and less  
 violence than before, (just judgment  
 for the wrong he had done me!) he  
 grew even weaker than I was myself.  
 My confusion began now to dissipate,  
 and I was happy enough to be able to  
 enjoy the humiliation of my foe. After  
 having indulged a while in the pleasure  
 the consideration of this gave me, and  
 having rendered my acknowledgments  
 to Brahma, for the protection he had so  
 signally shewn me, I forced myself from  
 him, and got up. As I grew more  
 composed, and more capable of reflection,  
 the more sensible I was of my  
 shame. Often was I going to upbraid  
 this rash undoer, as often I was prevented  
 by the secret confusion I yet felt  
 within me; and, after having eyed him  
 with all the indignation his insolence  
 deserved, I abruptly left him to his own  
 reflection.

“ reflections. To say the truth, I chose  
 “ rather to remain silent, than to enter  
 “ into particulars; which would have re-  
 “ called my blushes, and which, from the  
 “ weakness I had just been guilty of, made  
 “ me afraid of trusting to new occasions.

“ This,” pursued she, “ is the only  
 “ time I ever found myself in a danger I  
 “ had always dreaded before I knew it,  
 “ and which I have only known to make  
 “ me avoid it with greater care than ever.  
 “ I thought myself, indeed, so much the  
 “ more obliged to shun it, as from the  
 “ emotions I had felt, I discovered in my-  
 “ self a greater propensity to love, than I  
 “ had imagined.”

“ You see plainly, from hence,” said  
 Mocles, “ how important it is to try one’s  
 “ soul! and, now I think on it, what is  
 “ the condition of your’s at present? Has  
 “ this recital made any of those impressi-  
 “ ons you are fearful of?” “ Why, real-  
 “ ly,” answered she, blushing, “ I can-  
 “ not

“not say I am quite so tranquil as I was.”

“So that,” resumed he, “if you were

“actually to meet with such another rash

“spark, you could not help being in a

“little perplexity?” For heaven’s sake!”

cried she, “say no more about it—An

“adventure of that sort would be the

“cruellest misfortune which could befall

“me—” “Most certainly,” answered

he, in great agitation——“I see it plain-

“ly.”

At these words, he grew extremely pensive: from time to time he looked on Almaide with eyes, that spoke at once his desire, and his irresolution. The acknowledgement she just had made to him of her frailty, gave him encouragement; but not knowing in what manner, from his small experience, to make a proper advantage of it, he had well nigh frustrated all his wishes. The method he should take to seduce Almaide, was not the only thing that engrossed the attention of Mocles; restrained

by



by his character, agitated by his passions, now yielding, now resisting, I saw him alternately ready to decline, or to hazard all.

If Mocles had his cruel conflicts, the mind of Almaide was not more at ease. The recital she had just been making, lighted up anew all that she had dreaded. Her eyes sparkled with a fire not usual for modesty to exhibit; her perplexity; her struggling sighs; her languishing air; all spoke the fierce disorder of her soul. I was very impatient to know what would be the event of emotions in two persons so discreet, and which they had so imprudently been the means of exciting. Doubtless, they were not aware whither their too presumptuous virtue was leading them, and that they were verging towards a frailty, which, as persons of irreproachable character, I was obliged to wish for, in order to fulfil the condition of my fate, and the promises of Brama. Their looks, in fine,  
grew

grew each moment more ardent than before, and began to speak more plainly their desires. The difficulty, I saw, lay here: they were not so much withheld from a dread of falling, as they were diffculted how to bring their fall about. They, both alike, were tempted; both seemed to have the same lost wishes, and to be under the same necessity of disclosing them. To those of more experience in the world, this situation would not have been perplexing; but Almaïde and Mocles knew not the art of aiding one another, and durst neither confide nor hint their mutual flame, otherwise than by a few imperfect, stolen glances. Supposing they had even guessed at each other's tender thoughts, how did they know how far they might not be exposed? What would have been the confusion of the first who should speak, if in the other's heart there yet were left some remains of virtue? and, how was it possible for either to make the declaration, when each found such

power-

powerful reasons to be silent? Granting Almaide to be frailer than Mocles, was she not obliged to wait for the overture from him? Exclusive of the prudence she had ever made profession of, modesty, and the decency of her sex, forbad it from Almaide; and though this law may not be inviolable to every woman, yet, being a mere novice, or but little versed in gallantry, she was afraid of the contempt, so justly fixed on such a forward step. Besides, how did she know how Mocles would be affected? Had she been certain his despising her would yet not have prevented his complaisance, she, possibly, might have been as rash as others; but, if he should stop short! —

After meditating for some time how they might speak to each other, without exposing themselves to the shock of a refusal, Mocles, from whom a formal declaration would have been too derogatory to his pride and to religion, had recourse to sophistry,

as the only method by which he could insure success. Supposing he should thereby be even obliged to abate a little of his ardor, yet the appearance of reason was extremely necessary to this end; for by this semblance he would not be at a loss for a salvo for his honour by some dexterous turn, in case he should be foiled in his attempt. Happy had it been, if he had employed half the art in resisting, as he did in deluding himself, and in justifying his delusion!

“ Oh! plague!” said the sultan—“ if  
“ he goes awkwardly about the business, I  
“ must say, it is not for want of taking  
“ due time to consider of it”—“ I cannot  
“ see,” said the sultaneß, “ any great  
“ matter for astonishment in his having  
“ scruples; could a person in his circum-  
“ stances avoid making some reflections?”  
“ Ah—*some*, indeed, I grant,” answered  
Schah-Baham; “ and to be precise in  
“ my argumentation, there being a neces-  
“ sity only for *some* reflections, is the true  
“ reason



“ reason why he had no occasion to make  
 “ so many.” These people must have been  
 “ under terrible fatality, not to enter into  
 “ themselves in all the time they were about  
 “ it”—You narrowly escaped making a ju-  
 “ dicious remark there,” resumed the sul-  
 taness — “ Narrowly escaped !” said  
 Schah-Baham, “ may I presume to ask the  
 “ meaning of that expression ? I will say,  
 “ Madam, you have as pretty a way of talk-  
 “ ing, and as little respectful, as any per-  
 “ son I know ; and there is not, perhaps,  
 “ a sultan in the world, except myself,  
 “ who would bear with it” — “ What I  
 “ mean,” replied the sultaness, “ is, that  
 “ your remark is not quite well found-  
 “ ed : the tumultuous ideas, that filled  
 “ Almaide and Mocles, succeeded one  
 “ another with extreme velocity ; and, if  
 “ you would vouchsafe to give attention,  
 “ you would perceive, that what has taken  
 “ up Amanzei a quarter of an hour to tell  
 “ us, ought not to suspend their resolu-  
 “ tions

"tions a couple of minutes."—"Well, then," replied the sultan, "the relator must be an ass, to employ so much time in telling, what the people he speaks of, thought, with so much velocity"—"I should be glad," resumed she, "to hear as much from your Majesty"—"And, suppose you did," returned he? "I have a hundred good reasons I can tell you, for believing I should acquit myself with honour; but I would yet do better than all that; for where I found anything mighty difficult to tell, without further ado, I would even pass it over."

The conflict of mind, which Mocles experienced from his desires, or his struggles to suppress them, gave him so serious and pensive a cast, that Almaide thought proper, at last, to ask the occasion of his so long silence. "I fear," added she, "you are giving way to dismal thoughts?" "It is too true," answered he; "the cause

“ cause I owe to the recital you have just  
 “ been giving me.”——Almaide appear-  
 ing greatly astonish’d at what he said, “ be  
 “ not surpriz’d at it,” continued he,  
 “ nor yet be more shock’d at what I am  
 “ going to tell you, how extraordinary  
 “ soever it will be to hear it from my  
 “ mouth : To be plain, then, I am much  
 “ disturb’d that the rash youth, how little  
 “ complaisance soever he shew’d you, had  
 “ not time to perpetrate his foul in-  
 “ tentions.” “ Ah ! Moxles !” cried Al-  
 maide, “ why say you so ?” “ Yes,” an-  
 swer’d he ; “ because in that case, you  
 “ would have had it in your power to re-  
 “ move some doubts, that have long  
 “ distract’d me ; and which you have oc-  
 “ casion’d to return in all their force ;  
 “ and, from our mutual inexperience,  
 “ they must subsist for ever, since you  
 “ cannot satisfy my queries ; for it would  
 “ be too dangerous for me to seek the so-  
 “ lution from any other person than your-  
 VOL. I. I “ self.

" self. My curiosity on this head is of  
 " such a strange nature for a man of my  
 " sacred character, that, without knowing  
 " me, as you do, they would ascribe to  
 " me motives, which would not do me ho-  
 " nour." " Most certainly," answered  
 she, " you will run no hazard in disclos-  
 " ing yourself to me."—" For that very  
 " reason," resumed he, " I could almost  
 " wish you had been more experienced;  
 " for, having a mutual confidence in each  
 " other, I might depend on your conceal-  
 " ing nothing from me. Even could I  
 " question your friendship, and the good  
 " opinion you are pleased to have of my  
 " discretion, the frankness with which  
 " you have confided in me your most se-  
 " cret emotions would intirely satisfy me  
 " in that particular." " Let us under-  
 " stand you, however," replied she: " by  
 " dint of reasoning, perhaps, I shall be  
 " able"——" Oh, no!" interrupted  
 he——" you can only afford me conjec-  
 " tures;



"tures; and the lights I want, are such  
 "as require the most exact certainty.  
 "But, not to keep you any longer in sus-  
 "pence, I will explain myself, and leave  
 "it to you to judge, whether it redounds  
 "to the reputation of so learned a person  
 "as I am, to discover so total an igno-  
 "rance in the article I mean to discuss:  
 "Nor is it less your interest than mine  
 "to co-operate in this research; since it  
 "is not possible, but that a person, vir-  
 "tuous as you are, must be agitated with  
 "the same thoughts that I am." "How  
 "you terrify one!" said Almaide to him  
 —"I conjure you, to speak."—"Well  
 "then," said he to her—"suppose I am  
 "not altogether satisfied, that there is  
 "much merit in our never having ne-  
 "glected our important duties"—"Ah!  
 "heaven! what is it I hear!" cried she,  
 pretty much nettled that the conversation  
 took so serious a turn—"Nothing,"  
 resumed he, "but what, I fancy, I can

“ make evident—— for your part, you  
 “ have never tasted of the sweets of love;  
 “ (for I cannot call what you may think  
 “ you proved in your adventure with the  
 “ daring youth, but a very imperfect  
 “ sketch) and, as for me, I studiously  
 “ have shunned it; but yet, is that suffi-  
 “ cient to make us think ourselves so per-  
 “ fect? Perhaps you will say we have had  
 “ our desires, and we have triumphed  
 “ over them—is even this, again, a vic-  
 “ tory so mighty? did we well know  
 “ what it was we wished for? or are we  
 “ certain that we had desires? Believe  
 “ me, we have been imposed upon by  
 “ our pride; and, what we took for  
 “ most violent desires, was, doubtless,  
 “ only a very slight temptation. Per-  
 “ haps, however, we were misguided ra-  
 “ ther by our ignorance: heaven send it!  
 “ But, if it be true (as much I fear it is)  
 “ that we have at any time been tempted  
 “ to magnify our conquests, or even have  
 “ had

“ had a conscious thought of having ob-  
 “ tained any, in what a maze of error  
 “ have we lived ! While we were flatter-  
 “ ing ourselves with being virtuous, even  
 “ then, perhaps, we were more imperfect  
 “ than those, whom we presumed to cen-  
 “ sure, and by our vanity could even  
 “ reckon one vice more than they inhe-  
 “ rited.”

“ Oh ! what a mortifying reflection do  
 “ you make !” said Almaide.—“ I have  
 “ been long perplexed, alas ! with  
 “ thoughts like these,” replied he, with  
 a melancholy air ; “ and am still the more  
 “ so, as I see only one way to resolve my  
 “ doubts, and that, simple as it may seem,  
 “ is not without its danger.” “ Oh !  
 “ pray, let us hear it then,” entreated she ;  
 “ for, as I am exactly in your situation  
 “ of mind, it concerns me to know every  
 “ thing about it.”—“ I ought to know  
 “ you as I do,” answered he, “ not to be  
 “ afraid to oblige you.

“ You and I, for instance, believe our-  
“ selves to be virtuous; but, as I observ-  
“ ed just now, we know not what virtue  
“ is, in reality, as you will presently be  
“ convinced of. In what does virtue con-  
“ sist? in absolutely depriving ourselves  
“ of those things, which are most pleas-  
“ ing to our senses. And, who can tell  
“ the thing, that pleases them most? he  
“ alone, who has enjoyed every thing.  
“ Now, if the knowledge of pleasure can  
“ only be known from enjoyment, a per-  
“ son that never has tasted it, cannot have  
“ a competent knowledge of it. What  
“ can he sacrifice, then? why, nothing;  
“ a chimæra; for what other name can  
“ be given to those desires, which prompt  
“ us to a thing we are entirely ignorant  
“ of? And if, according to this, the me-  
“ rit of the sacrifice consists alone in the  
“ difficulty, pray, what merit can he claim,  
“ who only sacrifices an idea? whereas,  
“ after having been devoted to pleasure,  
“ and



“ and had all the relish imaginable for it,  
 “ then to renounce it! then to sacrifice  
 “ one’s self! that is, indeed, the only  
 “ truly noble virtue! and what you and  
 “ I have not had it in our power to boast  
 “ of.”

“ Too well I see it,” said Almaide,—  
 “ we have it not, indeed, to boast of”——  
 “ And yet we used to flatter ourselves we  
 “ had,” answered Mocles, hastily; who  
 was not willing to give her time for re-  
 flection, for fear she should see through  
 his sophistry——“ nay, we have pre-  
 “ sumed to believe it too; and from that  
 “ moment we were guilty of pride. How  
 “ do I rejoice!” continued he, “ indeed,  
 “ I cannot enough commend your good  
 “ sense in perceiving, that unless we bring  
 “ ourselves to reason with freedom on vir-  
 “ tue and vice, we can never have an ade-  
 “ quate notion of either. Nor is this the  
 “ only mischief: without this liberty, we  
 “ should be perpetually plagued with a de-

“ fire of knowing what we should con-  
 “ tinue with as great obstinacy in the ig-  
 “ norance of. The soul being irresistibly  
 “ agitated by this curiosity, suffers greatly  
 “ in its functions: by the contrariety of its  
 “ emotions, it ceases to reason, to com-  
 “ pare, to pursue, to discuss, to fathom  
 “ what it has conceived, at the very time  
 “ it would be able, without this painful  
 “ embarrassment, to devote itself wholly  
 “ to the practice of virtue. If, in the pur-  
 “ suit of knowledge, it went upon a fixed  
 “ principle, it would be much more tran-  
 “ quil; and the more tranquil, the more  
 “ perfect it would be: it follows, there-  
 “ fore, that we ought to know vice, if  
 “ we desire to be less disturbed in the ex-  
 “ ercise of virtue.”

Though Almaide, in this demonstration  
 of the necessity of pleasure, was only just  
 able to conceive enough of it to free her  
 mind from scruples, this sophistry, never-  
 theless, made her tremble, and she remain-  
 ed

ed for some moments hesitating and in suspense. But the desire she had of being thoroughly acquainted with the mysteries of love, or of once more abandoning herself to her emotions, prevailed over her terror, and she seemed, in fine, rather surprised than frightened at what she had heard——“And so, you are of opinion, “then,” asked she, with a trembling voice, “that we should be the perfecter for it?” “Undoubtedly,” replied he——“be pleased to consider the situation we are both “in at present, and you will own there “cannot be a more horrible one.”——“I “am sadly convinced,” said she——“it is, “indeed, most deplorable!”——“In the first place,” continued he, “we “are not certain we are virtuous, which “is a melancholy state for persons who “think as we do. Nor is this cruel un- “certainty the only misfortune attending “our condition: it is but too evident, “that there are a thousand things we be-  
 15 “lieved

" lieved ourselves exempt from observ-  
 " ing, infinitely more essential, perhaps,  
 " than our voluntary privation of plea-  
 " sure: consequently, by the shadow of  
 " a virtue, which, very probably, is pure-  
 " ly chimerical, we have been guilty of  
 " a real crime; or (which though not of  
 " the same importance, is yet attended  
 " with considerable inconveniencies) we  
 " have neglected the doing of good ac-  
 " tions. In fine, supposing us such as  
 " we have hitherto believed ourselves to  
 " be, I could relinquish the virtue we  
 " have practised, without imagining there  
 " was any great merit in possessing it.  
 " Let a man have his choice of two bur-  
 " thens, and he will certainly take the  
 " lightest."

" I understand you," said she, sighing;  
 " that is as much as to say, that we have  
 " done the same. What scruples do you  
 " fill one with!" continued she, casting  
 " down her eyes—" and how is it possible

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" to



“ to rid one’s self of them, when the  
 “ very means that should free me, creates  
 “ them in greater abundance!” “ This  
 “ means,” resumed he hastily, “ is, at  
 “ the bottom, less to be dreaded than it  
 “ seems. Let me suppose (and, would  
 “ to Brama, there was no foundation for  
 “ the supposition!) that we are quite  
 “ wearied out with our uncertainty; that  
 “ we begin to be sensible, at last, that it  
 “ is our duty to deliver ourselves from  
 “ it; that we are resolved to have a know-  
 “ ledge of pleasure, and be, ourselves, the  
 “ judges of its charms; what danger  
 “ would result from the trial? Were we  
 “ like other souls, indeed, and could not  
 “ fly from it, when once we had tasted  
 “ it, I own there would be some hazard;  
 “ but, without presuming too much, I  
 “ think we have no need to be diffident  
 “ of ourselves, in that respect. That I  
 “ may conceal nothing from you, if, as  
 “ I imagine, there is less in this pleasure,

“ than is generally represented, it will  
“ give us no pain to comply with a thing;  
“ which, alluring or not, is deemed me-  
“ ritorious to deny ourselves of: if, on  
“ the contrary, the gratification conveys  
“ an enchanting disorder to the senses, as  
“ surprizing as is said, we shall, in that  
“ case, have the greater joy in denying  
“ ourselves of it, as we shall then be cer-  
“ tain of its being a consummate virtue  
“ to do so.”

This reasoning, which Almaide would, doubtless, have detested, had she been more mistress of herself, had all the effect the impious bramin proposed, over a soul, which wanted only the appearance of an excuse to yield. After having beheld him for some time with irresolute confusion in her eyes, “ I am as sensible as you,” said she to him, “ of the absolute necessity of this trial; but then, with whom shall we with safety make it?”

At

At these words, with every softer languishment in her eyes, she inclined herself towards Mocles, who by this had nestled to her; and now he held her folded in his arms. “Since it is agreed to hazard a trial, then,” replied he to her, “I believe you will think with me, it cannot be made by others than ourselves: Here, we may rely with surety; and, as beyond all doubt, it is merely with a view of rendering our enquiries after virtue the more extensive, that we are prompted to do what seems destructive of it; so, in like manner, we may be as certain, we shall not make a habit of a curiosity, that springs from such laudable principles. Which way soever, in fine, it turns out, we are certain of reaping benefit, since the remembrance of our fall will be a sure preservative against pride.”

Almaide returned no answer; she yet seemed fluctuating; and Mocles, who was resolved,

resolved, at all events, to make her determine, proposed, as the finishing stroke to her deception, that he would make the trial very gently, and by slow degrees, in order, he said, that they might not proceed further than was necessary, provided they found in their first essays wherewith to ascertain their doubts. On these conditions, she surrendered——soon did they bewilder themselves in soft desires; and still provoking them by awkward methods, employed with little grace, and with as little judgment, they so enflamed their senses, that they presently forgot the capitulation they had just been making. Both finding either too much, or too little, of what they felt, they thought proper to proceed, or were not able to stop: And so——“you strait became something  
 “else, I suppose?” interrupted the sultan. “Not so, please your majesty,” answered Amanzei——“I cannot comprehend how that can be,” resumed Schah-Baham;



Baham; "and yet, I see plainly, the rea-  
 son is because the thing in itself is in-  
 comprehensible; for it is not to  
 be doubted, but they had all the requisites  
 that your brama exacted. I was of the  
 same opinion, at first, with your un-  
 conquerable majesty," replied Aman-  
 zei; "but, after all, one of the two must  
 certainly have imposed on the other."  
 "I suppose, you were devilishly mad at  
 the disappointment," replied the sul-  
 tan! "But, pray, tell me—which of the  
 two did you suspect most?" "The re-  
 cital of Almaide," answered Amanzei,  
 "gave me strong suspicions of her frail-  
 ty; and, notwithstanding the extreme  
 ignorance she affected in surrendering  
 to Mocles, I could not help believing,  
 that she had suppressed the very circum-  
 stance of her adventure, which was the  
 occasion that still detained me in my  
 prison." "Right woman, in faith,"  
 cried the sultan! "to be sure, your re-  
 flection

“lection is just—well—I did not take  
 “any notice, but I would have laid my  
 “crown to a pebble that she had not told  
 “all—why; if I had discovered any va-  
 “nity that way, there is a sort of people  
 “would have presently taxed me with  
 “aping the physiognomist—aye—aye—  
 “take my word, it was she that prevent-  
 “ed your deliverance.”

“Probable as the thing is,” answered  
 Amanzei, “it is not without its difficul-  
 “ties: I must own, for a man of the  
 “simplicity I took Mocles to be, he did  
 “not seem to want experience.” “Why  
 “this alters the system a good deal,”  
 said the sultan; “for—aye—aye—I see  
 “plain—it was him after all”——“Come  
 “let me adjust the matter,” said the sul-  
 taness—“It was she; then he, you say:  
 “now, without puzzling the cause, why  
 “might they not have been both frail?”  
 “Right, again,” replied the sultan:  
 “strictly speaking, it might be so; but  
 “yet,

“ yet, methinks, there would have been  
 “ more humour if it had been one, or the  
 “ other: I cannot tell very well why, in-  
 “ deed; but I should have liked it better  
 “ —but, come—let us see—what is it  
 “ they talked of afterwards?—that is the  
 “ most interesting thing, now, by far.”

Mocles, continued Amanzei, was the  
 first, who recovered himself from his trans-  
 ports. He seemed, at first, surprized to  
 find himself in the arms of Almaide; and  
 reason, by degrees, resuming its empire,  
 horror succeeded to his astonishment.  
 Scarce could he credit what he now be-  
 held—he could not comprehend it possible  
 to be; and hoped some dream alone pre-  
 sented to him this shocking scene. Too  
 certain, at last, of his misfortune, sadly he  
 turned his eyes within himself, and recol-  
 lecting all he had done to seduce Almaide,  
 how much he had been deluded by his cri-  
 minal passion; and by what horrid arts he  
 gradually

gradually had overcome her, he fell into the bitterest lamentations.

Almaide, by this, began to open her eyes; but, not being quite come to herself, as Mocles was, she seemed rather confounded, than afflicted. Whether, in fine, it was the despair she saw him in, that made her sensible of her fall, or whether, of herself, she was her own accuser; "Ah, "Mocles!" cried she, all in tears, "you "have ruined me!" Mocles confessed it; owned he had seduced her; lamented over her; endeavoured to console her; and talked to her like a man truly afflicted, and who had come to a just sense of the danger of relying too much upon our own strength. In short, after having said to her all that the deepest sorrow, and the sincerest repentance can inspire, without daring to look at her, he departed, never to see her more.

Almaide, now left alone, grief and confusion did by turns overwhelm her. She passed the night in tears and sad reflections,



tions, and could not even excuse herself for the reproach she had made to Mocles, as she imagined there was too much vanity in it. Mocles, next day, shut himself up in the most austere retreat—"Aye, now, I am thoroughly convinced," interrupted the sultan—"it could not be him that is certain"—and the inconsolable Almaide, continued Amanzei, a few days after, followed his example—"Why I am as far to seek as ever, then—it could not be her neither, now I think on it—well—I never met with a more puzzling question in my life; and let them decide it that can."

## CHAP. X.

*Where, among other things, you will find a way to kill time.*

NOTWITHSTANDING the fancy I had taken for morality, I began to be sick of hearing so much of it between Almaide and Mocles, at the time he thought proper to make it subservient to the purposes of love. Had he deferred it a day longer, I should have taken my flight with the persuasion, that there were two women, at least, insensible to the soft passion in Agra; but, luckily, my patience prevented my running away with so injurious a notion.

After having taken my leave of Almaide, I wandered for a long time without fixing. I had no relish for austere censure, or that species of vice which I had already been witness of; and I made it my care therefore to avoid all houses of a decent,

cent, regular appearance. Strolling about one of the suburbs of Agra, which was full of polite little boxes, I determined, at last, in the choice of one, that belonged to a young lord, who did not live in it, but only went there now and then incog.

The next day after fixing myself, towards the evening, a lady came whisking in with great caution, who, by the magnificence of her dress, and yet more by the dignity of her air, I concluded was a woman of the first fashion. My eyes were dazzled with her charms: she was brighter than even Phenime, with all her modesty, and possessed such a soft engaging air, that as soon as I saw her, I could not help being warmly interested for her. By the manner of her coming into the cabinet where I was, she seemed confounded at the step she was taking: she trembled as she spoke to the slave that conducted her, and, without daring to lift up her eyes, placed herself upon me, full of cogitations, but  
withal

withal so languishing, it was not difficult to guess the object of them.

Scarce was she left at liberty to her thoughts, before reflections of a more melancholy cast took place; and, after a few gentle sighs, the pearly drops stole down her ruby cheeks. Her grief, however, appeared to be rather tender than sad; and she seemed less to weep at misfortune, than to fear it. Scarce had she dried up her tears, when a gay, loose, handsome, well-made, young nobleman, superbly drest, came capering and singing into the cabinet. His presence threw her into the utmost perplexity; a crimson glow straight flew into her cheek; she turned her eyes from him; put her handkerchief to her face, and did all she could to hide her soft confusion.

For his part he came towards her, with an air the least tender, but in the most gallant manner possible, and throwing himself at her feet, "What! my Zephis  
" here!"



“ here!” said he to her—“ do my eyes  
 “ deceive me, or not! is it my Zephis I  
 “ behold! can it be you! you whom I  
 “ adore, and whom I scarce durst hope to  
 “ find here! is it then you, in fine, that  
 “ I press thus in my arms!”——“ Yes,”  
 answered she, with a sigh,——“ it is I,  
 “ who ought not to have come here: it is  
 “ I, who even die with shame to find my-  
 “ self here; and who nevertheless could  
 “ not resist coming.” “ Well!—how  
 “ dear do you render this solitude!” cried  
 he kissing her hand——“ Ah! how many  
 “ pangs,” answered she, “ will it one  
 “ day perhaps cost me! the cruel proofs  
 “ I give you of my weakness, which will  
 “ become still more dreadful to me, as you  
 “ may possibly lose remembrance of them;  
 “ and Oh! I wish that Mazulhim may  
 “ not soon forget them! or should he  
 “ sometimes cast away a thought upon  
 “ me, it will be, I fear, only to despise  
 “ me for my too easy faith.”——“ Oh  
 “ heaven!

“heaven! what is this!” replied he gaily  
 —“how can you talk so idly! you that are  
 “so charming! do you know, in simple  
 “truth, that I never loved before with  
 “half the tenderness? now, how can you  
 “then be so unjust to doubt me!” “No,”  
 resumed she, gravely,—“I have not even  
 “the happiness to doubt: I know it is not  
 “in your power to be constant, or faith-  
 “ful, and I question even if you know  
 “what it is to love; and yet I love you;  
 “I have often told you so, and here I am  
 “come to tell it to you again. I am sen-  
 “sible of all my weakness; I see the con-  
 “sequences; and yet I must submit. My  
 “reason teaches me what I have to fear:  
 “but love makes me despise the danger.”

“Why,” answered he, “do you know  
 “that you are wronging me very much;  
 “doing me a mortal injury in thus  
 “suspecting my tenderness?” “Ah!  
 “Mazulhim!” cried she, “is it thus you  
 “feel for all I sacrifice! and thus for-  
 “tify

"tify my heart against my fears! I love  
 "you Mazulhim! I wish you knew how  
 "much! my heart is only your's; you  
 "know it is.—Say then you wish it may  
 "be ever so! if you but knew how much  
 "I stand in need only of believing that  
 "you love me, even out of humanity you  
 "would tell me so.—In you alone is all  
 "my happiness centered: to see you, to  
 "love you, is my only good; my only  
 "wishes: Is it possible then that you can  
 "not think of me, as I can think of you!"

"Bless me!" cried he—"I protest to  
 "you"—"Leave Mazulhim," interrupted she, "leave to me the care of your  
 "justification; I shall be a much better  
 "advocate for you, than you can be for  
 "yourself, as I am more strongly inclined  
 "to believe you love me, than you are to  
 "persuade me that you do." "I must  
 "own, Madam," resumed he, with a  
 "graver air, but not with a more affected  
 "heart, "I did not think myself unhappy

"enough, after all the marks I have en-  
 "deavoured to give you of my tenderness  
 "for these six months, to find you yet  
 "such an infidel. I am sensible of the ex-  
 "treme of passion, and such as I have had  
 "the happiness to inspire you with is ever  
 "attended with little distrusts; and if  
 "they only struck at my disquiet" added  
 he, pressing her in his arms, "I should  
 "complain much less, and the pleasure of  
 "finding you so delicate, would make me  
 "forget how unjust you are. But they  
 "endanger your repose, Madam! there is  
 "my concern; and if you knew me bet-  
 "ter, you would have no difficulty to be-  
 "lieve that that is infinitely dearer to me  
 "than my own."

Finishing these words, he would have  
 taken the tenderest liberties with Zephis.  
 But she repulsed him with so determined  
 an air, that he saw her resistance was more  
 than the usual efforts of the sex, which  
 now are only taken for mere matter of  
 form;



form; and beholding her with surprize,  
 “Madam,”—said he to her,—“is this  
 “the way of proving to me your tender-  
 “ness! and had I reason to expect such a  
 “cold return?” “For heaven’s sake!”  
 “hear me, Mazulhim,” answered she in  
 tears—“I did not come here without  
 “knowing what I exposed myself to; nor  
 “would you see me shed so many tears, if  
 “I was not determined to resign myself  
 “wholly to you. I love you; and if I  
 “only followed the dictates of my heart,  
 “I should not now be from your arms.  
 “But Mazulhim, there is time enough  
 “for tenderer moments; and I think our  
 “engagements are not quite so strict, but  
 “you may be less reserved in your pro-  
 “fessions. How does it stab me every  
 “time I think you do not love me! but  
 “judge how much more cause I should  
 “have to reproach you! and how much  
 “more wretched I should be to find it,  
 “when my weakness had left you nothing

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“ to desire ! governed by the wish to please,  
 “ inconstant by success, you only alas !  
 “ solicit to conquer, not to love : how do  
 “ I know but *such* may be your passion for  
 “ me ! examine well then your heart I  
 “ conjure you ! you are the disposer of  
 “ my fate ; and sure I have not deserved,  
 “ that you should make it miserable ! if  
 “ you are not actuated by the most perfect  
 “ passion : in a word, if you do not meet  
 “ me with a *mutual flame*, fear not to speak  
 “ it : I shall not blush to be the price of  
 “ love ; but I should die of shame and  
 “ grief, to see myself made the sacrifice of  
 “ wanton whim.”

These words, and the tears Zephis accompanied them with, made no impression on the heart of Mazulhim. They had this effect however ; he thought proper to talk to her, in not quite so indifferent a strain as he had done at first. “ O ! do not thus  
 “ torture me with your cruel fears,” said he to her ! “ how little do I merit them !

“ how

“ how can my Zephis think, that I con-  
 “ found her with those contemptible things,  
 “ that hitherto have seemed to engross me !  
 “ I own, that my gay manner of life, gives  
 “ you just cause to doubt ; but would you  
 “ have had me, O my Zephis ! in addi-  
 “ tion to my folly in passing some idle  
 “ hours with women, the stupidity of lov-  
 “ ing them ? I grant that I have never  
 “ guarded against love. And to defend  
 “ myself, could I do better than converse  
 “ with women, without decency, without  
 “ morals, who, at the same time that they  
 “ were the most alluring in their persons,  
 “ preserved me from the tender passion by  
 “ their characters. I have a habit, you  
 “ say, of inconstancy from success. But  
 “ can you think so meanly of me as to be-  
 “ lieve I could ever be vain of any con-  
 “ quest till now : Believe me, not one of  
 “ all these conquests which you imagine  
 “ are so flattering to me, but what in the  
 “ very instant covered me with inward

“ confusion ! And there is not one, in fine,  
 “ I do not wish from my very soul not to  
 “ have obtained, since they render me less  
 “ worthy of my Zephis.”

Zephis, at these words, appeared to be a  
 good deal consoled, and stretched out her  
 hand to Mazulhim, fixing at the same time  
 her lovely eyes upon him, with such a  
 melting softness of expression, as love alone  
 can inspire. “ Yes, Zephis,” continued  
 Mazulhim, “ I love you ! how greatly do  
 “ I love you ! what a pleasing reflection  
 “ is it to me, now languishing, that in all  
 “ my furious transports, I did not sacri-  
 “ fice to love ! how dear it is to know it,  
 “ and to know it alone through you !  
 “ Without your charms ! without your  
 “ virtues ! I had ever been a stranger to  
 “ the passion, which scarce even you could  
 “ make me sensible of. To you alone I  
 “ owe the charming impulse : for you  
 “ alone I shall be all devoted.”



"Ah, Mazulhim!" cried she—"how happy shall we be, if you think what you say! if it be true that you love me, you will always love me!" At these words she leaned upon Mazulhim, and taking him tenderly in her arms, reclined her head upon his. A swimming softness glistered in her eyes, and the transports of Mazulhim dissolved her very soul. Ye gods! what looks, when he had raised them to their zenith of confusion! never had I beheld such but from Phenime.

Prepared, as she was, however, for rendering Mazulhim the happiest of lovers, she could not see him so near his bliss, without renewing her fears, and, perhaps, had some small reflections about her virtue.

"You doubt not but I love you," said she to him, making the slenderest resistance; "and cannot you."—"Ah, Zephis!" interrupted he—"can you yet hesitate to prove to me your tenderness?"

Zephis sighed, without making any answer; overcome more by her own love, than she was convinced of that of her lover, she yielded, at last, to his desires. Too happy Mazulhim! what charming prospects offered to thy view! and how did the bashfulness of Zephis enhance the value of her beauties! accordingly, they did not strike Mazulhim a little. All raised his admiration. He found all in Zephis, and she was at once the object of his praises and his kisses. I was so far from blaming his admiration, that I joined mine to his. Yet I could not help thinking, that for a person in his situation, he dwelt rather too long upon it, as it seemed to suspend, at least, if it did not make him quite forget his desires.

True it is, the more delicate we are, the more we amuse ourselves with the trifling part. The robuster passion alone knows those tender eruptions, which imagination gives, and which it varies in a swift progression.

gression. Yet we cannot eternally devote ourselves to pleasure. And if we sometimes dwell upon it, it is less to terminate desire than to kindle it anew. For some moments I had a good opinion enough of Mazulhim, to attribute his humiliation to an excess of love; and the charms of Zephis justified me in it. Probably, Zephis herself believed the same; and was not undeceived so soon as I was. I could not conceive how the transports of a lover, so tender! so eager for his happiness! should grow the languider, as they found wherewith still to excite them; he was brisk without fire; profuse in his admiration, and his fine speeches. But are these the best proofs of a lover's desires?

How artful soever Mazulhim dissembled his misfortune, Zephis at last perceived the little success of her charms, at which she seemed, however, neither surprized nor mortified. And turning her beauteous eyes upon her lover, rise, said she to him with

a gentle smile, I find I am happier than I thought for.

Mazulhim, who saw the ridicule, attempted awkwardly to prove to Zephis, that he did not merit the injurious idea she seemed to have of him; and further justifying himself, said to her in a tone that made me laugh, "Why, really, my dear, "you vexed one so!" "Come," answered Zephis, "I can smile at your perplexity, but your grief would give me pain; "and it would be too unworthy of me, "if you thought I regretted it."—"Ah! "Zephis!" interrupted Mazulhim, "how terrible is it to be in the wrong before "you! and how difficult to justify one's "self!" "Nay—do not thus afflict yourself," answered Zephis tenderly—"I "now indeed believe, but from this moment believe, you love me; and you "could not have given me a greater instance of your tenderness than by the "very



“very thing which has given you so much  
“cause for self-reproach.”

“Good!”—said the sultan—“that may  
“pass well enough for a copy of her coun-  
“tenance, as the saying is; but she was  
“devilishly nettled at the bottom I will  
“answer for her. First, because the thing  
“is mortifying in itself;—and what in  
“appearance is mortifying to all women,  
“cannot be pleasing to one; or at least  
“you must allow in that case she would  
“be very whimsical. Besides, wherever  
“there is an impulse, it is not a thing so  
“easily quieted, as it may be easily said.

“And now we are upon this subject, I  
“remember one day—(I was quite a boy  
“you must know) Aye—she was a woman  
“—I cannot say how it happened; we  
“were nevertheless both—Really, I  
“should never have suspected myself; but  
“would you think it! in the twinkling  
“of an eye—I do not well know how to  
“tell it you though; but after all, it was

“ to little purpose to entertain her with  
 “ the finest speeches perhaps ever were  
 “ penned ; the more I spoke, the more she  
 “ wept. I never saw such a thing before  
 “ nor since ; but I must own indeed, the  
 “ scene was enough to soften a flint. I  
 “ told her, however, among other things,  
 “ that she ought not to take it so to heart,  
 “ for that I did not do it on purpose.”——  
 “ Come, — finish, I pray, your fine paral-  
 “ lel, interrupted the sultaneſs.”——“ Why,  
 “ this is pleasant enough,” answered Shah  
 Baham, “ that a man cannot be allowed to  
 “ tell a story, and in his own house too !  
 “ From hence, as I was ſaying, I con-  
 “ cluded, as an invariable maxim, that as  
 “ there is no woman whatever, to whom  
 “ ſuch a thing can give a real pleaſure ;  
 “ conſequently, the miſtreſs of Mazulhim,  
 “ in ſpite of the fine things ſhe ſaid ——  
 “ It is very probable, would have been full  
 “ as well pleaſed if ſhe had had no occaſion  
 “ to ſay them,” interrupted the ſultaneſs ;  
 “ but

“but take this along with you however,  
 “that what you think so grievous to a wo-  
 “man, afflicts her less than it is teasing  
 “to her” — “That is right,” resumed  
 the sultan — “For example, a man would  
 “have nothing to do, but — let me alone  
 “for that — Emir! proceed.”

How disconcerted soever Mazulhim ap-  
 peared at his adventure, he seemed yet more  
 confounded at the manner in which Zephis  
 took it.

“If any thing,” said he to her, “can  
 “console me under a disgrace so shocking,  
 “it is to see, that it has no power over your  
 “heart. What women should I not be  
 “detested by, if they had as much reason  
 “to complain of me!” “I will own,”  
 answered Zephis, “that I should perhaps  
 “do the same as they, if I attributed this  
 “accident to your coldness. But, if, as  
 “you say, and I believe, excess of love,  
 “stagnates all your senses; I find in the  
 “adventure a thousand things more flat-  
 “tering

"tering to me than all your most success-  
 "ful transports. Too well do I love you,  
 "not to believe that you return my love.  
 "Perhaps too, I may be too vain," added  
 she, smiling, "in imagining I may have been  
 "in part to blame. But let the motive of  
 "my indulgence be whatever it will, this I  
 "know, that you have my whole forgive-  
 "ness. One thing more I must observe,  
 "I should be much more uneasy at the  
 "least reason to suspect your fidelity, than  
 "at what so much affects you. Yes, my  
 "Mazulhim! be to me but faithful, and  
 "may I ever find you such as actually you  
 "are! what I should lose in what you may  
 "call pleasure, would it not be amply  
 "made up to me in the certainty of your  
 "being constant?"

While Zephis was speaking, Mazulhim,  
 who gladly would have been less obliged  
 to her, omitted nothing that might enable  
 him to rise superior to his misfortune. Ze-  
 phis yielded her sought assistance with a com-  
 plaisance,



plaisance, which in the main he did not much approve of, as it every moment shewed him less excusable. Her complaisance soon grew into tenderness, which insensibly still augmented: she resisted less, or yielded with better grace: her eyes too sparkled with a fire I had not yet observed in them: only this instant did she seem to have surrendered truly: before, she had only suffered the ardours of Mazulhim; now she partook them all. The reluctance inseparable from the yielding moment, which so many women act, and so few feel, was now no more: Zephis could hear herself praised by Mazulhim without a flutter, and even seemed to wish for fresh encomiums: she blushed, but it was no longer bashfulness that made her blush; no longer did she turn away her eyes from objects, that seemed at first offensive to them; and the commiseration that Mazulhim inspired her with was in fine boundless; nevertheless —

“Never—

“ Nevertheless ” — interrupted the sultan — “ I take you — there is an impatient little gentleman for you ! well — I know not any thing for the long run so insupportable as this procedure of Mazulhim, and I will take upon me to say, that Zephis lost all patience.” And I, “ said the sultaneß,” take upon me to assert the contrary : “ to be angry at such a misfortune is to incur it ” — “ O yes ! ” resumed the sultan — “ as if a woman was capable of making such a nice distinction ! this however is certain, I know, that if I was in a parallel case, I should be devilish angry, and should not think myself a jot the more unreasonable for all that I should not — well, but let us hear what Zephis says to the matter ; for in this, as in all other things, every one has his fancy.”

How indulgent soever she was, resumed Amanzei, the obstinacy of her lover’s misfortune :

fortune began to make her uneasy. Whether having done more for him than the first time, she might think she deserved it less; or whether being now in more favourable dispositions, she found her reason less capable of supporting it.

Mazulhim, less sensible of his misfortune than Zephis, or perhaps accustomed to put a good face on such accidents, and not having the deference for Zephis, which he ought to have had, attempted, what with more policy, or more politeness, he would not have attempted; and she seemed displeased at the offer less for the presumption of it, than for the indignity it was to her charms. In spite of her confusion, she gave him a malicious smile, as much as to say, she was not a person to whom such temerity would be agreeable. But being certain that she should soon see him punished for it, she acquiesced in his ridiculous attempts with an intrepidity, that every woman is fond enough of shewing in such cases, but which

is not always attended with success. Though Mazulhim was less to be pitied now than he had been, he had not so much recovered as to be congratulated upon it; and with all his efforts, Zephis had little cause to be afraid of them.

By the wild confusion of Mazulhim, I had reason to believe, that if there was no remedy for one part of what had happened to him; through the goodness of such women as Zephis, he was not destitute of all resource in his misfortunes. I would not designedly, however, give offence to any in what I say: but who knows, after all, but the men are oftener to blame than they are?

Be that as it will, Mazulhim testified so simple a surprize, and threw the odium on other women, so entirely to the honour of Zephis, that she could not forbear laughing. If you had consulted me about it, "said she "to him," I could have told you how it would be, "though perhaps you would not have believed me." "I should certainly



"taily then have been in the wrong,"  
 answered he; but after ten years of success-  
 "ful experience could I well expect this?  
 "And had I not reason to believe that yet  
 "possible, which with you alone I vainly  
 "have attempted? Ah, Zephis!" added  
 he — "do I then find in that which ought  
 "to accomplish all my wishes only fresh  
 "cause to curse my cruel fate?" "I am  
 "very sensible," answered she smiling,  
 "how wretched you must be, and be as-  
 "sured I feel the deepest pity for you!"  
 "Ah, Zephis!" resumed he, with a more  
 solid air of transport, than what I had ob-  
 served in him, "nothing can equal my  
 "tenderness, but your charms! each mo-  
 "ment augments my ardor, and my de-  
 "spair; and Oh! I feel" —  
 "For heaven's sake! Mazulhim, do not  
 "thus discompose yourself! What happi-  
 "ness is it after all that you regret so much  
 "the loss of! none — If you truly love  
 "me, you are not to be pitied. One kind  
 "look

“ look of mine ought to make you happier  
 “ than all the pleasure which you vainly  
 “ wish for, even though you found it in  
 “ another object.” “ I am quite con-  
 “ founded, and charmed with your genero-  
 “ fity,” said he; “ but while you increase  
 “ my love, you aggravate my grief.”  
 “ Come let us wave this topick,” said  
 Zephis rising from her seat — “ What!”  
 cried he, “ will you then quit me so soon!  
 “ Oh! do not abandon me, Zephis, to  
 “ my present horror?” “ No Mazulhim,”  
 replied she, “ I promised to devote this day  
 “ to you; and may it not seem longer to  
 “ you than it does to me! but let us leave  
 “ this place to taste the sweets of this de-  
 “ lightful evening, and dissipate your me-  
 “ lancholy thoughts from objects that dis-  
 “ turb them. Perhaps, Mazulhim, the  
 “ more we are bent on pleasure, we enjoy  
 “ it less: let us try then, if by giving less  
 “ attention, we shall not be in better dis-  
 “ positions for it.”

The

The generous Zephis, at these words, left the cabinet, conducted by Mazulhim in the most obsequious manner.

What is not a little singular is, that notwithstanding Mazulhim acquitted himself so ill in his assignations, he was the young fellow of Agra the most admired: scarce was there a woman, that had not had, or did not wish to have him for a lover. Gay, handsome, sprightly, ever disappointing, but never without objects to disappoint; all the women knew it, and yet they all were studious of engaging him: In short, his reputation was astonishing! they thought him — what did they not think him! — and after all, what was he? How much was he not indebted to the discretion of the women, whom he treated ever way so ill!

After he had walked with Zephis some time in the garden, they returned. I quickly fixed my eyes on Mazulhim, expecting to find a gayer alteration in his looks; but by the flatness of his air, I fancied there was

was none; nor was I at all mistaken. Zephis indeed came, and threw herself upon me with negligence enough, and Mazulhim sat at her feet upon the floor. Having little to say, and by the help of all his fancy incapable of finding out amusement for her, he fell into a senseless agitation, looking at her however in a very piteous manner. Ashamed at last of the part he was acting to the most beautiful woman in Agra; confounded at his misfortune, and desirous of retrieving it, yet trembling to expose himself to fresh affronts, he remained some moments without knowing what to resolve on. He was apprehensive besides, lest his silence and his coldness should be attributed by Zephis rather to his indifference than to his regrets and fears. At this he started up; snatched her in his arms, and kissing her with a sudden rapture, he seemed determined at one bold push to force himself from the lethargy he was plunged in. Although surprized, Zephis seemed to deliberate



berate within herself, whether she should condescend to the new attempts of Mazulhim. If she was prompted by her compassion to agree to all, she could not help reflecting at the same time with grief, that she never was so cruel to him, as when she refused him nothing. "Is he desirous," said she, "of being blest? or little enough acquainted with me to think he should offend me if he did not endeavour to become so? And is it *love* or *vanity*, that renews within him these sudden starts of tenderness."

While she was taken up with these cogitations, Mazulhim, either impatient at his troublesome situation, or desirous of preventing Zephis from falling into a similar one, employed all the better circumstances of love he so much excelled in; which are so agreeable before and after more serious affairs, but never were designed to supply the place of them. Zephis at first refused to listen to him; but finding, by the unusual

usual eagerness of Mazulhim, that he intreated of her more complaisance than she had had yet occasion to shew him, out of the abundance of her generosity, she consented; shrugging up her shoulders, however, at what he had such a high opinion of, and, to do her justice, what she had much less expectation of, than he appeared to have.

The disregard, and even the uneasiness she shewed for some time, far from discouraging Mazulhim, quickened his addresses, and being, as I observed, the greatest proficient of his time in the lesser circumstances of love, he forced her, as it were, to yield to him more attention. From the attentive, he drew her on to the interesting part. The little reality of what he offered to her, insensibly disappeared; she even assisted in the illusion he had thrown her into; and experienced, in fine, what pleasures the imagination is productive of! and without

without it, how much nature would be limited!

As a completion of happiness, what Mazulhim, perhaps, had less regarded as a resource for himself, than as a sort of atonement to Zephis, was the thing that made impressions on him stronger than he had hoped for. The charms of Zephis becoming now more touching, gave him an emotion he had vainly wished for till then. And having lost all memory of his woes, and becoming too powerful to succumb, in the soft disorder that now began to diffuse itself through all the senses, he at last obtained a glorious victory over the dire obstacles, that had so long and cruelly opposed him.

"That is something like, now," said the sultan—"I comprehend you—*but*—*ter late, than never*—that is as much as to say, he"—"You will not, sure, give us an explanation," interrupted the sultaness! "Do you then think that

THE SOPHIA

“Amânzei has had the complaisance to  
 “leave any thing to be supplied by our  
 “imagination?” “I can say nothing as  
 “to that,” resumed the sultan——“nei-  
 “ther have I any business with it——  
 “but, in short, the thing is, as you know  
 “as well as I, this same Mazulhim is a  
 “little subject to accidents, and, in my  
 “simple opinion, we should inform our-  
 “selves—because, by chance, it might  
 “——but, what of Mazulhim, after all?”

He was happy, please your majesty. But  
 he knew better how to create, than to re-  
 pair misfortunes; and, had he had to do  
 with a less generous person than Zephis, I  
 question whether for so little he would  
 have obtained his pardon. Having more  
 vanity than passion, he seemed less sensible  
 of the happiness of possessing Zephis, than  
 of the pleasure of being able to see her with  
 less confusion. They entered into a ten-  
 der conversation, in which Zephis blended

all



all the soul, and Mazulhim nothing but an empty jargon.

A little after, they went to a supper, in which the owner had exerted all his elegance and taste. Zephis, more and more fired with her lover's presence, said a thousand things to him so delicate, I knew not which to admire most, her wit, or her tenderness. Though he was dazzled amidst such a profusion of charms, they had less effect on him, than on me; and his pride seemed to be more elated with the conquest of Zephis, than his heart was touched with that lively, delicate passion, which she expressed for him, and which, in spite of her fears for his inconstancy, wholly engrossed her attention.

If the possession of Zephis did not inspire Mazulhim with all the love it ought, it gave him, at least, a gayer turn, and his heart, though proof against the passion, was nevertheless languishing. The virtues of Zephis, which the ingrate praised,

without feeling them, and, perhaps, without believing her possessed of them, far from engaging him to her, seemed rather to estrange him from the constraint they laid him under. I saw not in Mazulhim that true tenderness of soul, which his mistress felt for him, though she began to inspire him with fresh desire. He beheld her with transport; sighed; recalled with rapture the blessing he had just enjoyed; and seemed eagerly to wish that they had ended supper. He even signified as much to her. But whether she trifled away the time with any purpose, or had not so good an opinion as he of the after-supper, she shewed much less impatience. She could not, however, forbear her fondness of him—they pressed each other.—In fine—oh! Mazulhim! how happy would'st thou have been, had'st thou known how to love like her!

A little after, Zephis went out, and Mazulhim followed, making her the most solemn protestations of eternal love and gratitude,

titude, which I believed to be so much the less sincere, as she deserved them best. Zephis was *too worthy* to engage his constancy. She was open, without disguise, without levity. Mazulhim was her first affair, and what would have been the happiness of any other person, was to his corrupted heart, an union, which afforded him neither pleasure nor amusement. He was a man only fit for those women, who, incapable of passion, and devoid of shame, have a thousand adventures, without having one lover; and who, from the indecency of their conduct, may be rather said to be fond of the *disbonour*, than of the *pleasure*. It was not, indeed, surprizing, that so empty a coxcomb as Mazulhim, should be approved by women of this stamp; nor that he again should look on *them* as the most engaging creatures in the world.

“ But how came it to pass, Amanzei,” asked the sultaneſs, “ that such a trifler as Mazulhim should be capable of making

“impressions on a person of the worth you  
 “describe Zephis of?” “If your majesty  
 “is pleased to recollect the character I  
 “gave of Mazulhim,” answered Aman-  
 zei, “you will be the less surprized at his  
 “becoming agreeable to Zephis: he was  
 “possessed of some pleasing qualities, and  
 “had the knack of mimicking some supe-  
 “rior virtues. Besides, Madam, Zephis is  
 “not the first woman of sense, that has had  
 “the misfortune to place her affections on  
 “a fop, as your majesty must be sensible  
 “by the abundant instances that happen  
 “every day.” “Without all doubt,”  
 said the sultan—“he is very much in the  
 “right—for example, we have instances  
 “of it every day—for the rest, pray don’t  
 “go now and ask me why? for, to be  
 “plain, I cannot tell you”—“Neither do  
 “I ask you,” resumed the sultaneß:  
 “these are things, that, with all your wit,  
 “I think, in simple truth, do not come  
 “within the compass of your knowledge.

“That



"That a woman of sense," continued  
 the sultaneſs, "ſhould be captivated with  
 " a parity of love and conſtancy, and being  
 " aſſured of the heart and probity of the  
 " man that loves her (that is, if there be  
 " any ſuch thing as certainty in that caſe)  
 " ſhe yields herſelf up to him at laſt, is  
 " not what ſurprizes me; but to be capa-  
 " ble of a weakneſs for a Mazulhim! that  
 " is, I own, beyond my comprehension!"  
 "Love," answered Amanzei, "would  
 " not be what it is, if"—"If, if," inter-  
 rupted the ſultan—"what are you going  
 " to be witty now for an hour together all  
 " about nothing? and have not I abſo-  
 lutely forbid you from entering into idle  
 " diſſertations? What is it to you, I would  
 " fain know, whether this ſame Zephis  
 " loves Mazulhim? or that one is a ſold,  
 " and the other a ſilly coxcomb? what of  
 " that? ſhe loves him as he is—but you  
 " want to have a wherefore? why did not  
 " you aſk the queſtion of Amanzei, while

“ he was a woman? do you think he can  
 “ remember any thing of the matter at this  
 “ distance of time? Upon the whole, you  
 “ are always so interrupting my tales with  
 “ your niceties, there is no hearing the  
 “ end of them; and that is why I think  
 “ you use me very ill——Come—emir—  
 “ where was it you left off? what became  
 “ of this Zephis, who is so very reasonable,  
 “ that I am quite sick of her? prithee,  
 “ what was the end of all this?”

Such as could not otherwise be expected, resumed Amanzei. Mazulhim, not to be quite bare-faced in his falsehood, preserved decency enough towards Zephis to deceive her, with all the privacy in his power; but either not being artful enough, or his infidelities becoming too frequent, and too glaring to be concealed from her any longer, she at last complained to him, but with all the delicacy and tenderness of love; and having all the blindness, he easily found means to pacify her. He continued his

his perfidies, and she renewed her reproaches. At last, he grew more impatient, and regardless of her love and tears, absolutely broke with her, leaving her covered with confusion for having *loved him*; and overwhelmed with grief for having *lost him*.

“By my faith!” said the sultan, “he did very well to quit her, and the reason is plain, because I should have done the very same thing myself. I know well enough she was exceeding pretty, and had a deal of merit, and all that; but with all this merit of her’s, I that expect to be entertained, I say, I should have grown weary of her as well as he. Not however that I am a Mazulhim: I defy the world to say it of me; but methinks there is something whimsical in the quitting of women, if it were only to hear them talk about it.”

## CHAP. XI.

*Contains a Receipt against Enchantments.*

**T**HREE days after my seeing Zephis for the first time, Mazulhim returned alone. Scarce had he time to give some necessary orders, before a sprightly ratling lady, with a fashionable indecency in her air, came into the cabinet to him. At a distance she was striking enough, but on a nearer view very indifferent; and but for her ridiculous looks and gestures, and the prodigious vivacity she affected, one would not even have taken notice of her. And, indeed, this was the only thing that made Mazulhim desirous to have her.

“Hah!” cried Mazulhim on seeing her, “is it you! and do you know now, that you are all divine for coming so soon!”

This beauty, who, in spite of her childish airs, was at least thirty years of age, advanced



advanced towards Mazulhim with a graceful negligence, in which consisted her chief merit, and without answering, or almost regarding him; "Well," said she, "your little retreat deserves more than you said of it; for I must own I think it delightful! furnished with such an elegance of luxury! It is downright celestial!" — "Aye,—is there any thing like it in the suburbs," answered he? — "would not one really think by this question," replied she, "that I was acquainted with a great many? — I only say," added she, "that this cabinet is charming, and nothing can exceed the gallantry of it! And I am not less charmed," said he, "that it has the honour of your approbation and your presence." — "O! as to my coming," replied she, "perhaps I have not been so scrupulous as I ought; it is not however that I am ignorant how to be as difficult in an affair, and to behave with as much decency as

"as another woman; but"—"you  
 "do not care for the trouble," interrupted  
 he—"and that is no bad reason let me tell  
 "you"—"Well; suppose it to be true,"  
 resumed she? "it proves exactly, that I  
 "am above deceit. When you told me  
 "yesterday, for example, how much you  
 "loved me, and made me the proposal  
 "of coming here. Why—I can assure  
 "you I was very much tempted to say no;  
 "but the frankness of my character would  
 "not permit me. I am naturally open and  
 "undisguised; you pleased me, and here  
 "I am come without further ceremony—  
 "do not you now think the worse of me for  
 "it?"—"Who I," answered he, shrug-  
 ging up his shoulders—"that is very  
 "pleasant—If it were possible, I have a  
 "million of times the better opinion of  
 "you"—"Well — how engaging  
 "you are," resumed she; "but pray tell  
 "me—have you been long here?" "Just  
 "long enough," returned he, "to be here  
 "before

“before you—I never was so confounded in  
 “my life—but I really was afraid you were  
 “come first.” “That would have been  
 “very fine truly,” said she; “but I would  
 “have taken care to have been even with  
 “you.”—“These things, you know,  
 “Madam,” answered he, “are not done  
 “with design, and may happen to the most  
 “punctual.”—“Yes”—resumed she,  
 —“I know it mighty well, but I should  
 “not have liked it for all that—Well,  
 “but I must tell you news—Zobeide  
 “has this very instant quitted Areb-chan.”  
 —“Is that all the harm she has done him,”  
 demanded he? “And Sophie,” continued  
 she, “has just taken Dara!” “Taken  
 “only him,” demanded he again?

While she was speaking, Mazulhim, who  
 knew her too well to pay her even a lit-  
 tle deference, took the greatest liberties  
 with her. For her part, she seemed as easy  
 about the matter as he was, throwing her  
 eyes in wild disorder round the cabinet;  
 then

then looking on her watch, "Come—  
 "come—do not be foolish, Mazulhim,"  
 cried she to him—"What are we to be  
 "alone the whole day?" "Doubtless,"  
 answered he—"What a question! O Lud!  
 "I did not expect that!" "Nay—for  
 "heaven's sake, desist!" added she, not  
 much caring he should or should not, (and  
 he too cared as little as she.) "You  
 "really are guilty of such follies as no  
 "body sure!—And why, pray, should we  
 "be alone?" "I thought," answered  
 Mazulhim coldly, "that our conversa-  
 "tion was to be no hindrance to our  
 "amusement, at least, according to the  
 "stipulation between us." "Stipula-  
 "tion!" cried she—"O frightful!  
 "where did you gather that, pray? I vow,  
 "I did not mention a syllable about it—  
 "But after all, it is the same to me; thank  
 "heaven! I know how to keep you with-  
 "in bounds—Nay—hold—good Sir—  
 "you have such strange ways, methinks!"  
 "Not



“Not stranger than other people, I hope.  
 “Together as we are, ought any thing to  
 “be called extravagant? Ah, Zulica,”  
 cried he—“you that have taste, tell me  
 “what you think of that cieling?” “I  
 “was just considering it,” added she, in  
 my mind, “it is over-charged with gild-  
 “ing; though I must own it is very beau-  
 “tiful,” continued she, sitting down on his  
 knee, but not in all appearance with a view  
 of being incommodious to him.

“Now I think on it, after all,” resum-  
 ed she, “I must be very weak to believe,  
 “that you will be faithful to me, who  
 “never yet have proved constant to any  
 “woman.” “Talk not of that,” replied  
 he, fully employed, and thanks to the good-  
 ness of Zulica, very commodiously; “you  
 “would not be a little perplexed, I fancy  
 “now, if I should prove more constant  
 “than you expect me to be”—“And you  
 “will plague one then?” said she, not  
 in the least opposing, or endeavouring to  
 get

get from him. "As for constancy," continued she, "with as much indifference as  
 "if Mazulhim had discontinued;" "I  
 "will venture to say no body has it more  
 "in their nature than myself." "Con-  
 "stancy," answered he, "is grown so  
 "very common now-a-days, it ceases to  
 "be a virtue; and the person possessed of  
 "it has no great reason to be vain upon it.  
 "But after all, however you may pride  
 "yourself, if I mistake not, you have chang-  
 "ed in your time." "Not so much of  
 "that—pray do not fancy so"—"I only  
 "say, and you know it very well," an-  
 "swered he, "that I can reckon up some of  
 "your lovers, if not them all." "Well!  
 "and what of that?" said she. "You  
 "may know too, that I might have had  
 "more if I had thought fit—But let us  
 "have done with this stuff—How you  
 "torment one!"—"Much less than I  
 "ought"—"More than I care for, I as-  
 "sure you," replied she—"How!" said he  
 "—do

—“do not you love me then?”—“Yes, answered she, “but—as I live, Mazulhim! you make me downright angry” — “a mere joke,” returned he coldly—  
 “That is impossible.”

With this, he laid her gently down upon me—“Well—I protest Mazulhim,” said she to him—decently settling herself—“I shall grow quite outrageous with you —and take notice—I vow”—

In spite of the terrible menaces of Zulica, Mazulhim seemed resolved to exasperate her the more. But as he had got a bad habit of waiting for himself, and she had that of waiting for no body, she was enraged at him beyond expression. In spite of her anger, however, she was willing to attend a little, and her vanity got the better of her judgment. Of all the circumstances of her lover (and certainly they were not a few) this was the single mortifying one, that had ever failed her of the only proof she looked on of her intrinsic worth: besides, Mazulhim, though  
 so

so worthy of her esteem, was, if you believe common fame, capable of wonders ! If she had nothing to reproach herself with (as it was self-evident she had not) it might be asked, How Mazulhim should be guilty of so singular a mistake to her of all women, who had never been so to any other ? She had been told by every body she was a charming creature ; and Mazulhim had too gallant a reputation not to deserve her some way or other ; therefore what occasioned in her these reflections, not being natural, she thought he would soon recover.

With these, and a good many comfortable *hear-says*, Zulica armed herself with a compulsive patience, and stifled her indignation as well as she was able. Mazulhim entertained her with all the turns in the power of gallantry, on beauties that seemed to affect him but little. “ Sure,” said he, “ all the magicians of India have conspired “ to render me thus ! But,” continued he, “ what



“ what can their charms against your’s;  
 “ my Zulica! they may have weakened  
 “ their influence, but they shall not tri-  
 “ umph over them.”

To all this, Zulica, more angry than Mazulhim was disconcerted, answered only with a malicious smile; but did not give it all the expression she would have done, for fear of depressing him. “ It seems then,” demanded she, with an air of raillery, “ that you are not upon good terms with the  
 “ magicians? I would advise you by all  
 “ means to make it up with them: people  
 “ capable of playing you such pranks are  
 “ dangerous enemies!” “ They would be  
 “ much less so,” answered he, “ if you  
 “ took it thoroughly into your head to de-  
 “ feat them; nay, and I do not doubt, in  
 “ spite of their ill-will, had my passion  
 “ been less violent, but I should have  
 “ proved myself”——“ O lack! that is a  
 “ thing I can give but little credit to,”  
 interrupted Zulica, who having calculated  
 within

within herself the time he ought to remain enchanted, began to think she had given him a sufficient respite. "I know very well," resumed he, "that if you judge of me with  
"rigour, you cannot be pleased; but the  
"less you do so, the more you ought to  
"endeavour to put an end to my misfortune." "I am afraid, that it is not  
"quite so proper," replied she — "I  
"thought you was not quite so nice," resumed he rallying—"I was in hopes"—  
"I must own," interrupted she, "you  
"take an excellent time to be witty—  
"well—you are in the right—This is an  
"adventure in which you shew yourself  
"to advantage." "Still, Zulica! on  
"your pleasantry," resumed he; "and  
"will you never take any other method but  
"what is hurtful to me, and perpetuates  
"my humiliation?" "I vow," said she,  
"that is the least of my care"—"But," demanded he, "if you care so little about  
"it, why are you so angry?" "That  
"is

“ is a question, permit me to say, Sir,  
 “ which does not deserve an answer.”

At these words she started up, in spite of the efforts he made to detain her. “ Let me  
 “ alone,” said she very peevishly, “ I will  
 “ neither see you, nor hear you.” “ Might  
 “ y well !” cried he, — “ I certainly  
 “ have seen as unfortunate women as your  
 “ ladyship, but never any so much out of  
 “ humour.”

This exclamation of Mazulhim did not make Zulica better tempered. Mortified at the accident which had happened, and enraged at the air of indifference with which Mazulhim expressed himself, she vented her fury on a large china jar that was just by her, which she broke in a thousand pieces.

“ Your most obedient,” said Mazulhim, smiling—“ I am glad, Madam, you can  
 “ amuse yourself any way—I can assure  
 “ you, however, you would not have had  
 “ any thing here to break, if all the ladies  
 “ I may have disoblged, had taken the  
 “ same

“ same methods of vengeance—But pray  
 “ go on, Madam,” added he, lolling upon  
 me—“ I would by no means have you to  
 “ restrain yourself.”

“ That is a woman now exactly after my  
 “ own heart,” said Schah-Baham! “ She  
 “ has something of a soul in her, and is  
 “ not like your Zephis there, to whom all  
 “ was indifferent, and who besides was the  
 “ stupidest prude I ever met with. I find  
 “ myself extravagantly interested for her;  
 “ and do you mind Amanzei, I recom-  
 “ mend her to you; prithee do not let her  
 “ be always in such vexation — I will fa-  
 “ vour her, Sir, answered Amanzei, as  
 “ much as the respect I owe to truth  
 “ will permit me.”

After Mazulhim had done speaking, he  
 seemed to be buried in a profound silence.  
 Zulica, who had placed herself in a corner  
 of the room at some distance from him,  
 bore the contemptible indifference he shew-  
 ed her with great spirit; and to return it,  
 fell



fell a singing. "If I mistake not," said  
 he to her, when she had done, "the air  
 "you have been favouring me with, is in  
 "such an opera?" To which she remained  
 silent—"Well"—continued he—"you  
 "have a very pretty voice, of small com-  
 "pass, indeed, but swelling, and the tone  
 "reaches the heart." "Happy is it that  
 "it pleases you," answered she, without  
 looking at him—"You may not, perhaps,  
 "believe me," returned he; "but, I as-  
 "sure you, that you could be praised by  
 "very few people so good judges as myself.  
 "There is another beauty too in you I  
 "must not omit to observe, if I may be  
 "thought worthy to speak my opinion;  
 "which is, that charming manner of ex-  
 "pression, that anticipates expectation  
 "by its vivacity, and its justness; and  
 "then your eyes add so many irresistible  
 "graces, it is impossible to hear you, with-  
 "out feeling one's self touched to the very  
 "soul

"soul——will you answer me again; hap-

"py is it that it pleases me?"

"No," answered she in a softer tone,

"I cannot be angry at your finding any

"thing agreeable in me; and the more I

"know you for a connoisseur, the more

"weight your encomiums ought to have

"with me." "That is the very reason,"

said he, "that I am so desirous of deserv-

"ing your's"—"O, doubtless!" said she,

——"You are not, surely going to say,"

answered he, "that you are not a judge of

"things? And, as the height of injustice,

"can you really imagine it a thing so indif-

"ferent to me whether you think well or

"ill of me? Will you add this injury to

"all you have already offered me? And,

"is it possible, Zulica, that what ought to

"increase your tenderness, should only

"serve to make you hate me?"

"And, is it possible, too," resumed she,

in anger, "that you can think me so stupid

"to look on that as a proof of love, which

"is

“ is the grossest affront in your power to  
 “ offer! An affront!” cried he, “ my  
 “ dearest Zulica! Little do you know of  
 “ love, if you think either of us ought to  
 “ blush at what has happened! I will ven-  
 “ ture to say more, those you have ho-  
 “ noured with your tenderness, must have  
 “ loved you very little, if you have not  
 “ found them all to be as unfortunate as  
 “ myself.

“ Nay, nay, Sir, I find it is time to be  
 “ going,” said she, rising; “ if you talk  
 “ at this rate, I must leave you to yourself:  
 “ I cannot bear such ridiculous stuff any  
 “ longer!” “ I perceive, Madam, it is of-  
 “ fensive to you,” answered he; “ and, I  
 “ confess, I am not a little surprised to  
 “ find it has such an effect upon you; but,  
 “ what is infinitely of more consequence  
 “ to me, is your dwelling so very much  
 “ on my guilt. To be plain, a raw, un-  
 “ experienced woman, indeed, might ea-  
 “ sily be excused in being shocked at such

“ an adventure. But that you should put  
“ yourself on a footing with one, who has  
“ never seen any thing ! Upon my word,  
“ it is unpardonable ! ” “ As you say,”  
said she, “ I must be weak to the last de-  
“ gree not to be delighted with it ! and I  
“ wonder at myself for not having yet  
“ made my acknowledgments for the sin-  
“ gular impresson I have made on you ! ”  
“ Raillery apart,” said he, going to rise—  
“ I will instantly furnish you with a proof  
“ I am not in the wrong.” “ No more  
“ of your nonsense, I beseech you,” cried  
she—“ I insist that you keep where you  
“ are”—“ Unjust, as your orders are, I  
“ will obey them, and keep myself at a dis-  
“ tance, since you will have it so”—  
“ True,” replied she—“ that will certain-  
“ ly be more commodious to you ; but  
“ you may yet do better, that is, to say no  
“ more about it ; for really you will never  
“ find me weak enough to be persuaded,  
“ that the stronger a lover’s passion is, the  
“ less



“less he can express it to the object of his  
“wishes.”

“That is to say, Madam, that you and  
“I are directly of opposite sentiments,” re-  
sumed he, with an indolent air—“We  
are,” returned she—“I have a perfect con-  
“viction of the matter”—“Then, posi-  
“tively, Madam, you may boast of being  
“a woman of the least delicacy of any one  
“I know; and, if I did not love you to  
“such a degree, that I cannot name the  
“thing under heaven capable of tearing  
“me from you, I must confess, your man-  
“ner of thinking in this matter, would  
“take me for ever from you.” “I should  
“wonder, indeed,” said she, “if it pleas-  
“ed you!”

“O! no, Madam”—resumed he with  
great coldness, “I am not so much inte-  
“rested as you are pleased to imagine, to  
“declare myself an enemy to it. But let  
“me observe, it is universally acknow-  
“ledged, and ever was in all ages, that the

“ more we are in love, the less use we have  
“ of our senses; and that it is only for  
“ hearts of a grosser mould, and incapa-  
“ ble of truly tasting the luxury of pas-  
“ sion, to possess themselves in those mo-  
“ ments, in which you have seen me so dif-  
“ ferent from myself. If the expectation of  
“ happiness is capable of disturbing a lo-  
“ ver, what must the approach of those  
“ charming minutes so ardently wished for,  
“ produce in him! How much must the  
“ soul have been impaired by precedent  
“ transports! And, though the disorder  
“ you reproach me with, is as disobliging  
“ to a woman of sensibility, as coldness of  
“ blood, which, perhaps, for want of distin-  
“ guishing, you take to be my case—And tell  
“ me, frankly,” added he, going to throw  
himself at her feet, “ Is it possible it can  
“ be the first time that you”—Ah! hea-  
“ vens! Cease your odious pleasantry,”  
interrupted she—“ let me alone—I will be-  
“ gone this instant, and never see you while

“ I

“I breathe.”——“Hush, Zulica!” said he to her, leading her towards me, “shall I never make you sensible, that by the manner of your treating my misfortune, you seem to be unconscious of not being able, with all your charms, to put a period to it?”

Whether the nice distinction of Mazulhim disposed Zulica to compassion, or the great reputation he had acquired for wit, made her take every thing for granted he said, she suffered herself to be led to me, making that faint resistance, which is rather an incentive, than an impediment. By degrees, Mazulhim gained greater advantages, and, at last, found himself in the same circumstances, that had before deceived Zulica, and given her so much cause of complaint.

Already disordered by the transports of Mazulhim, she began vehemently to wish she might not find in him such instability at first; already even she was high in expectation,

peccation, when his Zulhim, more delicate than ever, cruelly failed her in her softest hopes. She was the more enraged, as (vanity apart) he would have done her a pleasure to have behaved otherwise.

“Why does he not then come to a conclusion,” said the sultan? “I am as much displeased at him, as she can be—It is not because I have thought fit to espouse the cause of Zulica, but I ask you, if such usage is to be borne, and whether it would not try the patience of a dervise? He had much need, to persuade her to wait, with a vengeance! Amanzei, this is what I did not expect from you—If you go on thus, I shall begin to think you bear an ill-will to the woman; and, to be plain, I should not take it well of you; that is, I should take it very ill.” “Were I to frame a tale for your majesty,” answered Amanzei, “it would be easy for me to accommodate it to your taste; but you will please to remember,



“remember, I am only relating what I  
“have seen, and cannot, without deviat-  
“ing from truth, give Muzulim a dif-  
“ferent proceeding from that he really had.  
“Oh! what was this then?—  
“him!” cried Schah Bahan—“And how  
“provoked I am at him!” “But I can-  
“not conceive,” said the sultaneſs, “why  
“you ſhould be ſo angry at him: he did  
“not do it on purpoſe, no more than you.”  
“Who? he! by my faith,” reſumed he,  
“I know nothing of it; but, ſurely, he muſt  
“be a very bad fellow!” “Beſides,” ſaid  
the ſultaneſs again, “this Zulica you have  
“taken ſuch a fancy to, was one of the  
“greateſt”——“Softly, I beſeech you,  
“Madam,” interrupted the ſultan; “think  
“what you pleaſe, but let me hear no ill  
“of her—If I take any one under my pro-  
“tection, it is ſufficient, I know, to make  
“you diſpleaſed at it——This is always  
“your way; and it angers me, I muſt tell  
“you”——“I cannot help it,” answered  
the

the sultaneſs——“ I ſhall ſpeak my mind,  
 “ notwithſtanding; nor ſhould I be at all  
 “ aſtoniſhed, if this Zulica you like ſo well  
 “ to-day, ſhould be as much your abhor-  
 “ rence to-morrow”——“ That remains,  
 “ as yet, doubtful, and is more than you  
 “ can tell,” reſumed the ſultan——“ I do  
 “ not take up prejudices, like you, I would  
 “ have you to think—And, till that hap-  
 “ pens, let us hear a little more of her  
 “ hiſtory.”

Zulica ſeemed burſting with rage at this  
 new indignity to her charms. “ Truly,  
 “ Sir,” ſays ſhe to him, pushing him from  
 her, diſdainfully——“ If you mean this as a  
 “ deference to me, I muſt tell you it is  
 “ very ill-placed”——“ I ſhould be the firſt  
 “ to ſay ſo,” answered he, “ if I thought  
 “ you could once imagine yourſelf deſerv-  
 “ ing of the miſtakes I have committed;  
 “ but that is very viſibly far from being  
 “ the caſe, and I readily confeſs myſelf  
 “ without any juſtification.” “ When a  
 “ perſon

"person knows himself of certain dispositions," said she, "methinks he should not plague people." "It is accordingly my design to avoid it, if this affair is attended with any bad consequences," replied he; "but you will give me leave, however, to hope for the contrary"— "Really, Sir," said she, "I would not advise you to it."

At this, she got up, and snatching her fan and gloves, and pulling out a little carmine-box, she flew to the glass. As she was adjusting herself with great care, in order to put herself in *statu quo*, Mazulhim interrupted her little avocations, gently begged of her not to give herself a trouble she would certainly be obliged to take over again. Zulica made him no other answer than by a look, which sufficiently testified, that she gave little credit to his predictions. But finding he still continued troublesome, "Bless me!" said she to him, "am I to be eternally teized after this manner!"

"And

“And cannot you let people go about their  
 “business!” If you insist upon it, I must  
 “obey,” answered he; “but if I mistake  
 “not, you promised to sup with me?”  
 “Not that I know of,” resumed she—  
 “True,” said he, smiling; “I am sure  
 “you was not positive”—“Well, but,”  
 said she, “in short, I am engaged, and be-  
 “sides, it is late”—“That is very plea-  
 “sant,” returned he, throwing her upon  
 me, and endeavouring, if he could not, af-  
 ter all, find means to make the hours less  
 tedious to her. “Look you, Mazulhim,”  
 said she to him, greatly softened, “you  
 “may believe me, if you will, but in rea-  
 “lity, and without anger, the part you  
 “make me act is insupportable.” “I  
 “should be much less to be pitied,” an-  
 swered he, “had you been more complai-  
 “sant; but you are so rigid!” “Well,  
 “since it is so,” resumed she, “it would  
 “be quite barbarous to deprive you of the  
 “only excuse that is left for you.” He  
 answered,



answered, with great confidence, that he would readily put all his credit on the issue.

She accordingly suffered herself to be confuted by his reasoning, though rather for the sake of having the malicious pleasure to aggravate his mistake to the utmost. The more he claimed her compassion (for she was not of a generous nature) the more it raised her indignation. If she was piqued at his insensibility to her charms, it stabbed her to the soul, when she found he made so ungrateful a return to her ultimate favours; and it was her vanity alone, that supported her under the grievous mortification. Scarce had she formed the pleasing hopes of triumph, ere she beheld him yielding to a sudden faintness. Often was she tempted to renounce a hope, which seemed to present itself only to deceive her more cruelly. Yet after all she had done for Mazulhim, how could she now leave him to his piteous fate, when one moment longer, perhaps, might subdue his obstinate ingratitude?

ingratitude? If it would have been more pleasing for her to have owed all to the tenderness of Mazulhim, the more it was for her glory to snatch a stubborn victory.

This reasoning, perhaps, was not the justest that Zulica might have made use of; but for one in her situation, it was much that she was able to reason at all.

Mazulhim, perceiving by her looks the absolute necessity there was of diverting her thoughts from the perverse coldness, which, spite of himself, he still discovered, plied her, unceasingly, with the finest speeches, and particularly enlarged with great address on the compassionate part of her character. "Most certainly," cried she;—just perhaps as she had conceived a higher opinion of her complacencies to Mazulhim—"Yes —most certainly; it must be allowed I have a fine soul!"

At a declaration so extremely just, Mazulhim could not contain himself; and Zulica, knowing the danger of laughing in  
some

some moments, was very formally angry at him for it.

The gaiety of Mazulhim, however, was not of such direful consequences as she had apprehended. He began to feel himself released from the wicked hands of the magicians, who till then had so cruelly persecuted him. And though far from obtaining a complete victory over them, Zulica could not forbear highly congratulating herself upon it. Not that she so little understood the matter as to be deceived in the affair; but she was willing to fortify Mazulhim still more, by her seeming confidence in him—Alas! how little did she know him, to think he stood in need of it!

Mazulhim, famous for making the most of all advantages, scarce found himself relieved, before he carried his temerity so far, as to believe himself capable of the most arduous undertaking; and in spite of all that Zulica could say, though she was better able to judge of objects than him as be-

ing nearer to them ; she could not however restrain him. Whether he thought a moment's delay might be dangerous ; or whether (which is the most likely) he found he had no longer occasion for her influence, he was resolved to try what had never failed him, he said, but once, and that by the meekest accident in the world. Zulica, who was not easily to be imposed on, and who, besides, had not the worst opinion of herself of any woman in Agra, pretended to be astonished at his presumption, and, on the subject of his rudeness, made him very handsome remonstrances ; which, however, had not their effect. For Mazulhim still persisting in his obstinacy, by a necessary consequence of confiding in her charms, his mistress, in order to humble him, yielded, like Zephis, to circumstances, which she could not enough wonder at the folly of. “ Oh, yes !” said she, disdainfully—All at once her countenance changed, and, by the glow in her cheek, and the emotion



emotion she was in, as well as the exulting air of Mazûlhim, I judged, that what she had foretold as impracticable, was a matter of all the felicity imaginable.

“Do you observe, that now,” cried the sultan—“and yet the women are always  
 “complaining and wondering at things!  
 “Well—it is good to know this”—“Pray,”  
 demanded the sultaneſs, “have you made  
 “any new discovery?” Oh—I know  
 “what!” answered the sultan—“If ever  
 “any body pretends to reproach me, I  
 “know now what I have to ſay—I am  
 “very ſorry, however, for the mortification  
 “of Zulica, for ſhe certainly deſerved  
 “it leſs than any perſon—But proceed,  
 “Emir—There are abundance of  
 “fine things in what you have been relating  
 “to us, which gives me a better  
 “opinion of what is to follow.”

END OF VOL. I.

